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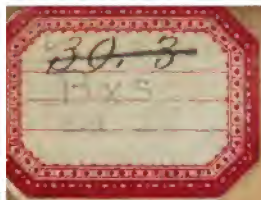
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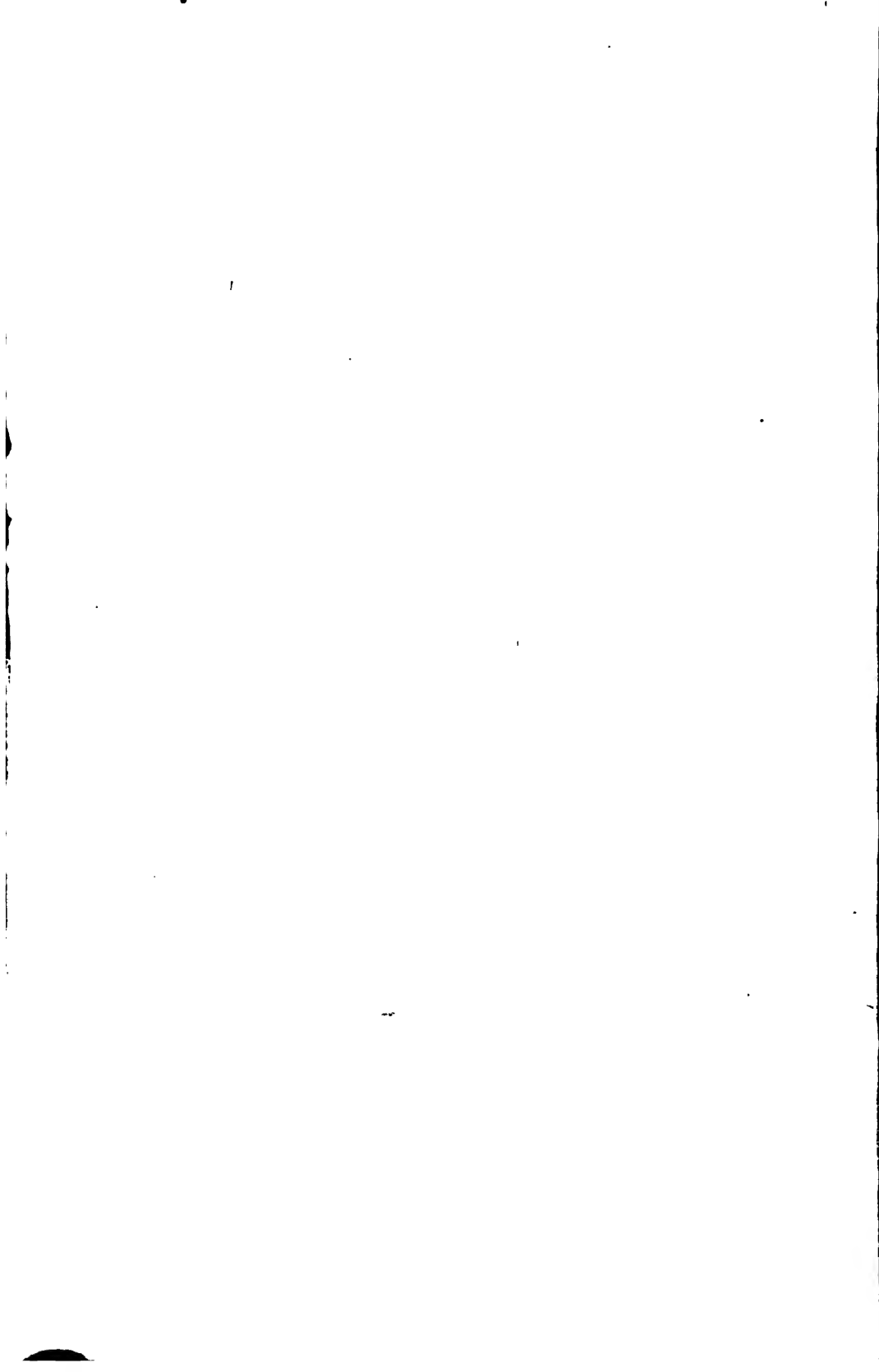
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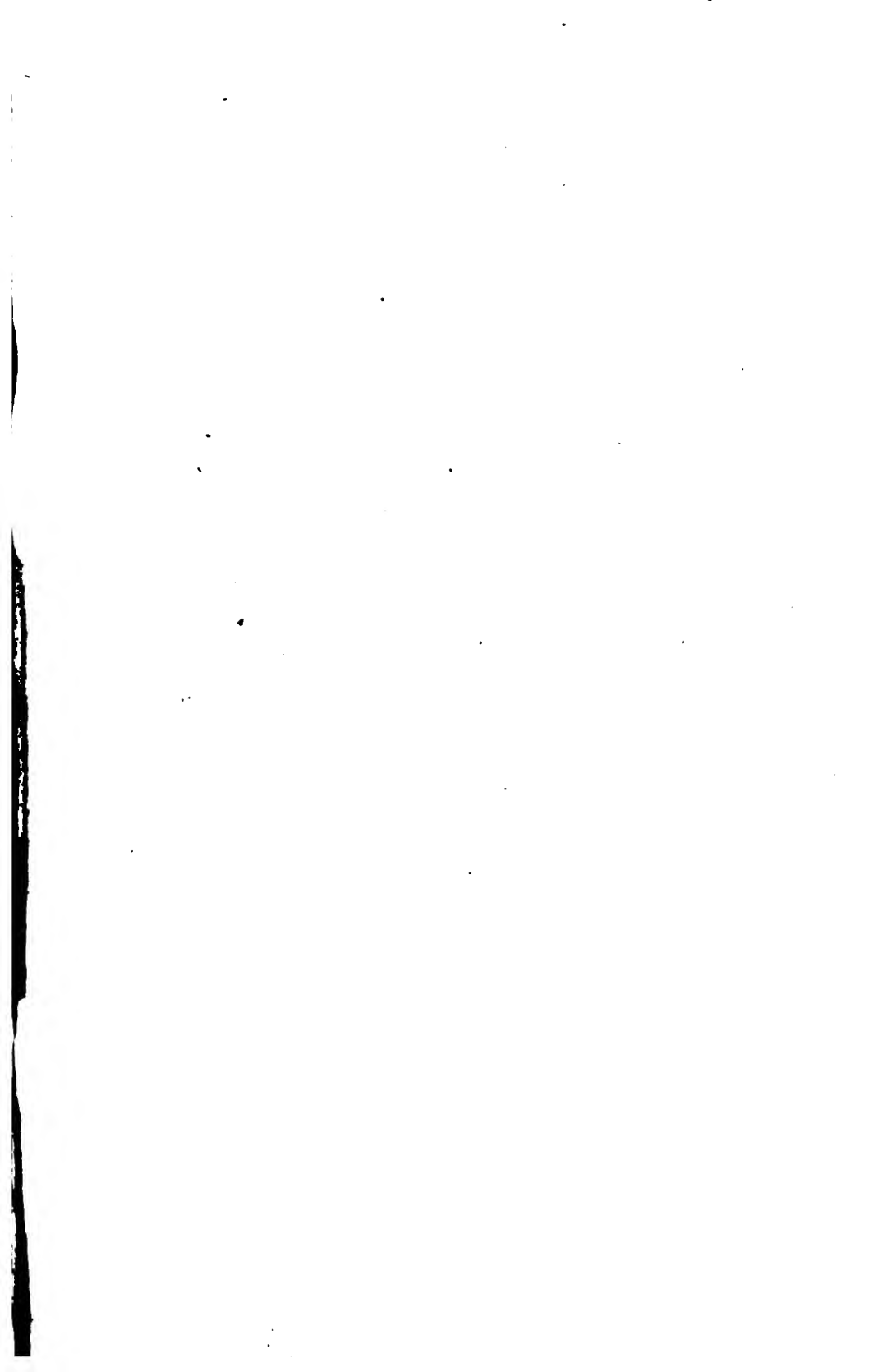
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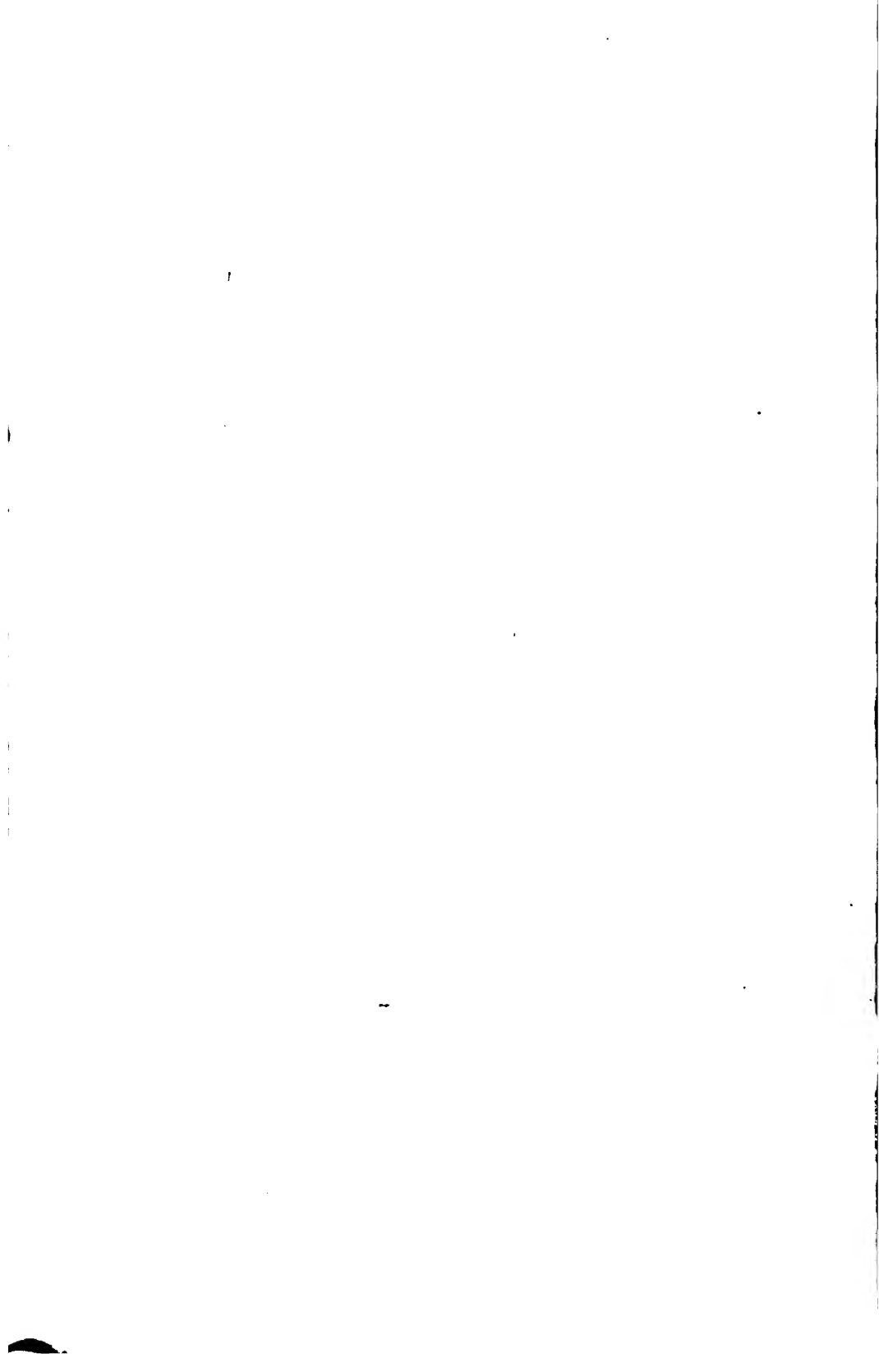
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INVITATION TO THE SECT LANE.

SPIRITUALISM.

42.43

BY

JOHN W. EDMONDS AND GEORGE T. DEXTER, M.D.

With an Appendix,

BY NATHANIEL P. TALLMADGE,

LATE U. S. SENATOR, AND GOVERNOR OF WISCONSIN.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom—to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit—to another, faith by the same Spirit—to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit—to another, the working of miracles—to another, prophecy—to another, discerning of spirits—to another, divers kinds of tongues—to another, the interpretation of tongues.—1 Cor. xii. 1, 4, 7-10.

EIGHTH EDITION.

New York:

PARTRIDGE & BRITTAN, PUBLISHERS,

800 BROADWAY,

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JOHN W. EDMONDS

AND

GEORGE T. DEXTER, M.D.,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District
of New York.

NEW YORK STEREOTYPE ASSOCIATION,
201 William Street.

Preface.

THE undersigned first became personally acquainted in April, 1852. They had both been engaged in the investigation of spiritual intercourse, and they occasionally met at circles during the ensuing summer. But in the spring of 1853, after the Judge's return from an absence from the country of nearly four months, they met again, and agreed to conduct their investigations together, and with renewed energy.

Accordingly a circle was formed to meet at Dr. Dexter's house, consisting of Dr. and Mrs. Dexter, Mr. Owen G. Warren, author of "Supernal Theology," and Judge Edmonds. All of them were more or less developed as mediums, though the communications were mostly through the Doctor, as the best developed. After a while, Mr. and Mrs. S. were added to the circle, she being developed as a most excellent speaking medium.

The circle met twice a week at the Doctor's house, and communications were received, which are given in this book. But it was soon apparent that others were to be received, and every evening that the Doctor visited the Judge at his residence, they were received. Most of those also are given in the book, those only being omitted which were not of general interest. They purported to come

principally from Swedenborg and Lord Bacon, though occasionally some others would write through the Doctor's hand, and more frequently speak through Mrs. S.

It was not originally the purpose of the undersigned to publish a book, nor were they aware that a regular plan of teaching through two prominent spirits was to be pursued. But as it had been Judge Edmonds' habit to keep minutes of his investigations, and write them out in full, he did so in this instance; but he supposed he was writing them for his own use, and to be incorporated in his other records, and he therefore continued the plan he had pursued of writing them out as for himself, and speaking of himself, like Franklin, in the first person singular, rather than like Cæsar, in the third.

When in time the purposes of the teaching spirits became manifest, and the publication of the revelations was in view, it was not thought worth while to alter the form in which the minutes were kept, for they were anxious to give the revelations to the world as precisely as possible as they received them, and they believed that a few words of explanation would make them intelligible in this respect.

When the revelations were given through the Doctor, he, in the first instance, wrote them down in pencil; when they were given through Mrs. S., they were written down in short-hand by the Judge; and when given through the Judge, they were written down by the Doctor or Mr. Warren. But in all instances they were reduced to form, and written out in full afterward by the Judge, as they now appear. So that in all cases it is him that is speaking in the first person singular, except when the spirits are speaking.

The desultory character of the teachings in this volume

will, it is hoped, be obviated in the next. Already has the work for that volume begun, and the circle meet four evenings in the week for that purpose. Two of the evenings are devoted to teachings in regard to the great doctrine of PROGRESSION, from the most inert particle of inanimate matter to the spirit of man, and two to an illustration and exemplification of life in the spheres. In respect to the latter, it has been said by the teaching spirits, "this first teaching or vision of fact is the continuation of our second volume, and in it will be given more of life, actual life of spirits than ever before; their occupations, habits, connections, dress, conversation, pleasures, amusements, business, and, in fine, all that could or should interest you as belonging to the spheres. Farther than this we can not go, except to show the passage from one sphere to another. You see distinctly what is absolutely going on in the life as it is, and the particular circumstances which occupy spirits at the time you see them. And you look at them as through a window at the real scenes of earthly life before you, and the persons acting therein. Now these things are given to your spirit, which is lifted upward and gifted with the faculty of really seeing what is described. The teachings will now assume the particular details of real life, and what is given is the reality of life as it is. You may suppose many things your own imagination, but it is really the absolute reality of living fact." And in regard to the first topic, it has been said, "while we approach the subject, to you and the world of so much importance, we should realize that what we now teach is different from that ever given to man before."

Thus the purposes of the further publication have been shadowed forth, and it is the intention of the undersigned

in that, as it has been in this, to give the teachings as precisely and faithfully as they are received as is possible. And as they have no selfish purposes to advance, no preconceived notions to defend or sustain, they believe they are, and will be, able to give them as free from mortal taint as is in nature practicable.

J. W. EDMONDS,
GEO. T. DEXTER, M.D.

NEW YORK, *September 1, 1853*

Introduction

BY JUDGE EDMONDS.

I HAVE recently had occasion to make to the public a statement of my views on the subject involved in the following papers. Forced into that publication by the injustice which had been done to my researches, and the result of them, I was compelled, from the nature of the channel through which I reached the public, to be brief and general. I annex that paper to this, and while I reiterate all I there said, I avail myself of this occasion to be more specific and particular, both as to the nature of my inquiries and the conclusions which flow from them.

I was early aware that the world at large looked upon the subject as exceedingly trivial and inconsiderable. I was not surprised at this, because I saw that what reached the general ear through the common newspapers of the day, was almost always unimportant, and frequently absurd and ridiculous. There were good reasons for this. The conductors of those journals desired to insert only what would amuse their readers, and were unwilling, and often refused, to open their columns to the graver and more important matters that flowed from the same source. And then they who received those more serious communications did not often feel themselves called upon to court the scoffs and sneers and persecution of the world, merely for the purpose of giving to that world that which aimed only at the general good.

I, however, early thought that I saw something in this mat-

ter more worthy the attention of mankind. If it was what it purported to be, and what so many thousands were daily believing it to be, an intercourse between man and an unseen and invisible power, governed by "some intelligent agent with a will of its own, independent of all persons present," it was indeed a new era in his history, fraught with most important consequences to him, and not unworthy a most careful examination.

Furthermore, if it had, as it seemed to have, a most intimate connection with our religious faith, it was worth while to inquire what effect it was to have in that respect, and whether it was addressed most to those who already professed some religious faith, and were attached to some religious sect, or to that still greater number who made no such profession and had no such connection. My intercourse with the world had taught me that most of the educated and intelligent among the people belonged to the latter class, and I found that many, very many secretly felt as I did. They had heard and read so many contradictory statements, that they hardly knew what to believe on that most momentous of all subjects, the life after death. I had the curiosity to examine the relative strength of these two classes, and was astonished at the result.

I confined my examination to my own country, and inquired how these two classes stood among our population, which the census of 1850 proclaimed to be 23,191,918. I could not at first get access to the census returns on that subject, and I referred to the "American Almanac," a work that I had for many years been in the habit of relying upon for the accuracy of its information, and there found that the professed Christians of our country amounted to only 4,731,639, leaving in the other class 18,460,279! Since then I have obtained access partially to the census returns, and find that this statement is a close approximation to the truth.

By these returns I find there were in the United States 36,011 churches, capable of containing each, on an average,

only 384 persons, and thus accommodating at their utmost capacity only 13,828,224. In other words, that to every 646 of our population, there was a church capable of containing only 384 persons, so that 9,363,694 of our people could not go to church if they would.* When to this I added the consideration known to every one to be true, that it was very rare indeed that any of our churches were filled to their utmost capacity, and the equally well-known fact that many who do frequent them are not professed religionists at all—some of them indeed decided unbelievers—I could not resist the conclusion, that a vast majority of the population of our country, professing as it did to be a Christian nation, were not, to say the least, professed believers in the religion of the day, and perhaps not of any religion, and the question pressed itself upon my mind, May there not be in this new phenomenon something calculated to supply this great want?

There was yet another consideration. The world of professing Christians was divided into numerous sects, and most of the sects were again divided into factions among themselves—thus causing discord among those to whom it was a primary lesson, “Love one another”—and I thought whether there might not be found in this new revelation some common platform on which all might congregate and unite in one common adoration of the God of all.

And yet another. It did not seem to me to be “Christian philosophy that would have men shrink from the investigation of Nature, from fear of finding a contradiction between the works and the word of God. When rightly un-

* Since the foregoing was written, I have come across this statement :

“In New York city there are 277 religious societies, as follows : Romish churches, 85 ; Presbyterian, 49 ; Episcopal, 49 ; Methodist, 86 ; Baptist, 35 ; Dutch Reformed 19 ; Congregational, 7 ; Lutheran, 6 ; Universalists, 5 ; Quakers, 4 ; Unitarians, 2 ; Jewish Synagogues, 8 ; all others, 27.”

Now, allowing that each one of these churches will contain a thousand people, and that each is full every Sunday—and every one will admit that in both respects this is a liberal allowance—there must be near 250,000 of our city population who never go to church, and who could not go if they would!

derstood, they must harmonize. Nor can we assume that human knowledge has as yet arrived at its maximum in the comprehension of the word any more than it has of the works of God."

With such feelings it was that I entered upon and continued my investigations. I aimed at three things: first, to ascertain beyond all doubt, whether that which was before me was a reality, and not a delusion or an imposture; next, whence came the intelligence and will that were directing it; and finally, to what end it tended?

I might, indeed, have been content merely to satisfy my own mind on the subject. And here let me pause a moment, while, *par parenthesis*, I express my regret at being compelled thus freely to speak of myself. I feel how ungraceful it is, and gladly would I avoid it. But what can I do? To borrow an illustration from my calling, when I thus appear upon the witnesses stand to testify of the things that I do know, I am bound in candor to disclose all those matters in reference to myself which, in every intelligent mind, will enter into the question how far I may be entitled to credit. And as I mean now to have no reservation, but to state as well those matters which I alone have witnessed, and which must depend solely on my veracity, as those which have been witnessed and can be sustained by others, so it seems to me that I ought, even at the hazard of being charged with egotism, to speak of all those things which may affect my credit one way or the other. Therefore it is that I speak of the reasons why I did not, as I might have done, confine the knowledge which I obtained within my own bosom. I knew full well what I should draw down upon myself by speaking out. I could not mistake all I saw around me. one universal shout of ridicule and condemnation of all who professed to believe, nay! even of those who went into the investigation at all, unless they came out of it fiery red in their denunciation of it as an "atrocious imposture." I knew full well that truth was ever born with many a bitter pang, and most to

him who gave it birth. And I had no right to expect, nor did I expect, to escape this common and apparently inevitable fate. But I confess that at first I shrank at the prospect before me.

It is now about two years since I was urged, most affectionately, yet most earnestly, for the sake of my fellow-men, to speak out fearlessly what I had discovered. I have now lying by me a long article which I then prepared on the subject, but which I then shrunk from publishing. It was no easy task for me to peril, at one fell swoop, all that during a life, extending to half a century, I had been struggling to attain, namely, the good opinion of my fellow-men. I had not aimed at wealth, but my reputation was, as it were, the very breath of my nostrils, and I could not but pause ere I jeopardized it. After a year's hesitancy, however, I at length spoke out, for the sake of others, not for my own, and I at least have not forgotten "the hue and cry" that was raised at my presumption. But I was buoyed up and sustained, and, indeed, impelled by the conviction—whether well founded or not, let others judge—that by my self-sacrifice I might do good to my fellow-man, and assist him to advance in goodness and knowledge, both in this world and in the world to come.

Having said thus much, that all may judge for themselves how far I was governed by a spirit of fanaticism which ought to detract from the weight of my testimony, I happily dismiss, for good and all, every personal consideration, and proceed with my narrative.

For the first four or five months of my investigations my chief inquiry was, Is this a reality, or an imposture or delusion? And here I pause to remark on one feature of the evidence which ought not to be overlooked, and that is, that much of it is so purely personal in its character, that it is nearly, if not quite impossible to convey an adequate idea of its force to others. For instance: if my person is touched inaudibly by an unseen power, no mortal being but myself can, in the very nature of things, have

any evidence but my say so. And though it may be to me most satisfactory, so that I can say beyond all peradventure "I know," yet it is impracticable for me to convey to any other one the same strength of evidence that is accorded to me. So it must be, when my most secret thoughts are read. It is impossible that the evidence can be presented to any other one with the same overwhelming force that it is to me, for the simple reason, that no one but myself can know positively what my thought was.

So, too, much of the evidence is appreciatory, and not tangible. What I mean by this is, that it is evidence addressed to the mind only, and not to the senses. For instance, when the spirits detail to us their daily life in the spheres, or proclaim to us the doctrine of PROGRESSION, we can not have the same evidence of those matters that we can of a house or a tree, which we can see and touch, and thus, by the aid of our senses, ascertain the reality. We can only reason upon it; we can only test it by all the laws of nature and all her manifestations around us, and then determine for ourselves what judgment to form, whether we will be governed by the conclusions of our judgment, or by a blind faith (as unlike true belief founded on our reason, as the stupor induced by laudanum is unlike a natural slumber).

Hence it is that it is so important that each one should investigate for himself, and not depend upon what others tell him. Pinning their faith upon the sleeve of others has for ages been the curse of mankind.

These considerations I was aware of during my investigations, and they caused me to receive with great caution the relations I obtained from others, and so they ought to admonish others to receive my statements with equal caution. For I beg it to be borne in mind, that I am not so much seeking to convince others, as I am aiming to induce them also to investigate for themselves as I have. But,

One cause of folly, one especial cause
Is this. Few know what wisdom is, though well

Defined in God's own words, and printed large
On heaven and earth in characters of light,
And sounded in the ear by every wind.

My first interview was with the rappings, and three things struck me as remarkable. One was, that under the circumstances it was beyond all cavil that the sounds were not produced by the instrumentality of any person present. Another was, that my mental questions were answered, when I knew that no person present could know what they were, or even that I was asking any; and a third was, that I was directed to correct a mistake I had made in my written memorandum of what was occurring, when I knew that no one present was aware that I had made a mistake, or what it was.

It can not be necessary that I pause here or elsewhere to detail the circumstances which cause me to say one thing was established "beyond cavil," and as to other things that "I know." I was at the time a disbeliever; I had all my wits about me, and was on the sharp look out for deception. And all who will thoroughly investigate this matter will over and over again be placed in the situation I was, where they will be compelled to say "I know," in defiance of all preconceived opinions, and of all the arguments in the world from those who do not and can not know. It is useless for a man to argue to me that the sun does not shine, when I know it does. There are thousands who have gone into this matter—and of clear and intelligent minds too—who have realized as I have, the truth of this proposition in regard to various phases of the phenomenon. It was but a few days ago that a vigorous mind wrote to me, "It will not do for the world to tell me that I am deceived, when from the oft-repeated evidence of my senses, and the deductions of my reason I know I know."*

* I can not persuade myself to resist the temptation of inserting here, for the benefit of those who insist upon it that we ought not to believe the evidence of our own senses, a few extracts from a writer who was considered

At my next interview, several things occurred to attract my attention. None of my questions were asked orally, some were written, and some merely framed in my mind,

"as standing at the head of those metaphysical philosophers who adorned the last century."

"By the laws of all nations, in the most solemn judicial trials wherein men's fortunes and lives are at stake, the sentence passes according to the testimony of eye or ear-witnesses of good credit. An upright judge will give a fair hearing to every objection that can be made to the integrity of a witness, and allow it to be possible that it can be corrupted; but no judge will ever suppose that witnesses may be imposed upon by trusting to their eyes and ears; and if skeptical counsel should plead against the testimony of witnesses, that they had no other evidence for what they declared but the testimony of their eyes and ears, and that we ought not to put so much faith in our senses as to deprive men of life or fortune upon their testimony, surely no upright judge would admit a plea of this kind. I believe no counsel, however skeptical, ever dared to offer such an argument; and if it was offered, it would be rejected with disdain.

"Can any stronger proof be given that it is the universal judgment of mankind that the evidence of sense is a kind of evidence which we may securely rest upon in the most momentous concerns of mankind; that it is a kind of evidence against which we ought not to admit any reasoning; and therefore, that to reason either for or against is an insult to common sense?

"The whole conduct of mankind in the daily occurrences of life, as well as the solemn procedure of judicatories in the trial of causes, civil and criminal, demonstrates this. I know only of two exceptions that may be offered against this being the universal belief of mankind.

"The first exception is that of some lunatics who have been persuaded of things that seem to *contradict* the clear testimony of their senses. * * *

"The other exception that may be made to the principle we have laid down is that of some philosophers who have maintained that the testimony of sense is fallacious, and therefore ought never to be trusted. Perhaps it might be a sufficient answer to this to say, that there is nothing so absurd which some philosophers have not maintained. It is one thing to profess a doctrine of this kind, another seriously to believe it, and to be governed by it in the conduct of life. It is evident that a man who did not believe his senses could not keep out of harm's way an hour of his life; yet in all the history of philosophy we never read of any skeptic that ever stepped into fire or water because he did not believe his senses, or that showed, in the conduct of life, less trust in his senses than other men have. This gives us just ground to apprehend that philosophy was never able to conquer that natural belief which men have in their senses; and that all their subtle reasonings against this belief were never able to persuade themselves. It appears, therefore, that the clear and distinct testimony of our senses carries

yet all were answered correctly. Once I began writing a question which I had thought, and it was answered when I had written only two words of it. Again was I told to correct a mistake in my minutes—for I was a novice, and did not do the business as well as I might—and we were told of what was occurring in the adjoining parlor with a person who had entered the room since we had left it, and which, on throwing open the folding doors, we found to be correct.

My next interview was where a party of eight or ten

irresistible conviction along with it to every man in his right judgment.”—*Reid on the Mind*, vol. i., Essay II.—Perception.

Such are the opinions of a learned philosopher, who has long been regarded as standard authority, and who has, in this instance at least, good, old-fashioned common-sense to support him. He is rather too material and Aristotelian for my notions in some respects, but he will be none the less acceptable for that to those who yield to authority the credit they deny to their own senses, and who, in their blind adherence to preconceived opinions, reject that which every sane mind admits.

I know nothing more or less important to set off against it, than the recent act of a learned Theban at the “Blarney Rock of New England,” who denounced at least half a million of his fellow-citizens for being rash enough to believe the evidence of their senses; and this amid “applause,” as he was careful to have it reported, as if this was the first time that the groundlings were made to laugh while the judicious grieved.

Professing to be a gentleman, he implies against those whose purposes are, to say the least, as upright as his own, an intention to deceive. Claiming, as his flatterers do for him, a high order of intellect, he charges against great numbers that they have not intelligence enough to know when they see and hear, and the willing vassalage of a delusion of which a child would be ashamed. The ignorance of the subject which prompted the wholesale denunciation, is the legitimate offspring of the wisdom which would have us deny the evidence of our own senses, and the argument used is kindred to that of the boor, who, in the vehemence of his denial that the earth rolled around, exclaimed, “Why, we should all fall off!”

It is melancholy to see intellect that might be made to conduce to the advancement of the race, thus pandering to the prejudices of the populace, and equally so to mark the contrast with the use of intellect in Galileo, in discovering at the hazard of his life the true laws of the universe, and thus opening to the human mind juster conceptions of the Creator, and the display of wisdom in Franklin, in disarming, in defiance of the clamor of the ignorant, the lightning of its power.

were assembled, and where I knew only one of them. The first thing that struck me was, that no communication could for more than half an hour be obtained, though all were anxious for it, and particularly the medium, who was reproached with being the cause of the interruption. At length, however, the rappings were heard, and the first thing was to direct a lady who was there merely as a spectator, who had never witnessed any thing of the kind, and who sat by herself in a corner of the room, to come to the table around which the party were sitting. She was reluctant to do so, yet finally consented, and received what purported to be a communication from a child she had lost, and which she said was in all respects accurate, even as to the cause of death, which was an unusual one, namely, swallowing a peach pit. One gentleman asked mental questions, to which he received answers which he said were correct; one asked aloud several personal questions on matters known only to himself, and received, what he said, were correct answers; and I asked mental questions and obtained answers, the truth of which I could not then tell, though afterward I ascertained. Then came the first physical manifestations I ever was present at, and they came in the shape of heavy poundings, as with a fist on the panel of a door, at some distance from the medium, and where she could not reach. We were sitting in the basement, and the poundings were answered from the cellar underneath, and from the second or third story overhead. Of course I could not tell who made them, nor could I inquire very closely without being in danger of giving offense, but I confess I suspected an imposition, and I was provoked at it. That is, I thought it done, not by the medium, who was a young, innocent girl of some fifteen, but by some one to deceive us. My journal of that day's proceedings looks as if my suspicions were known, for it contains this entry:

"I returned home and went to bed about twelve. About two or three o'clock, as I should judge, I was awakened and heard knockings faintly but hurriedly on the floor in one corner of my room. I listened, and

fairly persuaded myself it was mice. The moment I had come to this conclusion the rappings ceased in that corner, and were heard in an opposite corner, near the head of my bed. This time they were slow and distinct. I again persuaded myself it was the mice, and again the rappings changed to another part of the floor, and so on in different parts of the room, until I fell asleep."

My next interview presented to me a new feature. A gentleman and his wife were present, and he incidentally mentioned a faculty which she possessed of telling the character and mood of mind of a person upon whom she might fix her attention, though not knowing who the person was, and she did so by holding in her hand or binding on her forehead some writing in which that person's thoughts were expressed. I uttered a wish to witness that, and was gratified. I took out of my pocket and handed to her so that she did not see the writing, a memorandum of my own, in which I had recorded the thoughts of another person. I supposed it would be my own character that would be given, but instead of that, she gave me a very graphic and perfect delineation of the character and mood of mind of the person whose thoughts I had thus committed to paper, and that, when it was most manifest she could not have known what was on the paper.

I remark, in this connection, that this lady is one of the persons mentioned in my address to the public, and I have frequently since that time witnessed the same thing. I have among my records the delineations of the character of some of our eminent men, which would perhaps startle even them. I was once desirous of inviting a relative to live with me, but I knew nothing of that person's character, having seen the person only once, and that at the early age of nine years. A residence with me of over two years has only demonstrated to me how perfect was the delineation, even to the most delicate touches of character and feeling.

My next interview was marked by these features: I had received an anonymous letter—no unusual thing, by the

way, even at the present time—in which I was threatened with the exposure of some imputed official delinquency. I supposed the purpose was to extort money from me, but at this interview I made some inquiries about it, and was told, among other things, that it was of no consequence. I paid no attention to it, and it was not many days before I ascertained that it was indeed of no moment, for I received another in the same handwriting, which showed me the writer had given up all hopes of getting money out of me, and consoled himself for the disappointment by saying to me—

“That your face is the title-page to a tragedy, and that nature made you a villain, is
PUBLIC OPINION.”

Another feature was, that now for the first time in this connection I saw a clairvoyant, and our interview, which lasted nearly three hours, was conducted partly through him and partly through the rappings. And now, too, for the first time, I witnessed some of the more elevated teachings of this matter, so much of which I have since received. I do not record them here, for I have not the space, and it will suffice to say that they were such as no pure Christian could take exception to.

My next manifestation was when I was alone by myself, and it, like the previous private incident, seemed to come for the express purpose of reaching an impression of collusion that was lurking in my mind. It came when I was awake and in full possession of my senses, when I was not thinking of this subject (for I was reading one of Scott's novels), when my lamp was burning so that I could see every thing around me, and when I knew that no other person was present. I give it in the words of my journal, as I recorded it at the time:

Monday, February 17, 1851.

To-night, after I had gone to bed, and while I lay reading, according to my usual custom, I felt a touching on my left thigh, which I at first

thought was the twitching of the muscles which all will at times experience. It continued, however, so long, and with such regularity of intervals, that I began to think it could not be from that cause. I accordingly put my hand down by the side of and upon my thigh, and the touching ceased. The moment I withdrew my hand it was renewed. This I did several times, and always with the same result. I then altered the position of my hand. Formerly I had laid it flat upon the spot touched, so as completely to cover it, but now I laid it so that the edge of my hand touched my thigh and my fingers extended off laterally. The touchings on my thigh were renewed, and not only that, but there was a feeling on the top of my hand and across my fingers, as if that which touched my thigh had passed across my hand and touched each finger as it passed. It seemed like a stream of electricity passing across and touching my hand, and then touching my thigh with a spot about as large as my little finger. I placed my hand in that position and took it away again several times, and uniformly with the same result. I removed all clothes from my person, but with the same result.

This continued for twenty or twenty-five minutes, during which time I resorted to various expedients to test the reality of what I felt. I determined to ascertain whether it was intelligent. I asked a question aloud. While I was asking, the touching ceased, and when my question was put, my thigh was twice touched with distinct intervals. I repeated the question mentally with the same result, only the answer was given by three touches passing across my hand to my thigh. I asked other questions, but no attention was paid to them. •

These touchings were on the outer side of my left thigh. After continuing some time, they ceased at that spot, and made their appearance on the front of my thigh more faintly, and touching a spot about the size of a penny. They continued there only a few minutes, when I was touched sharply twice on my right foot at two different places, as if by the point of a nail in the hands of a child or some feeble person.

After that there came a stream of touchings from my left big toe, all the way up my leg to the upper part of the thigh. They were very numerous, and so rapid as to form almost a stream, yet each touch was quite distinct.

This stream ran up and down my leg several times in a perfectly straight line, and then ceased.

The touchings then appeared at my left side, near my loins, very gently and at intervals until I fell asleep.

During the first part of this, I sat up in my bed, and took my lamp in my hand and held it close to my thigh, so that I could see it very distinctly, and conducted some considerable part of the inquiry with the lamp thus held.

February 23d.

Last night, between twelve and one, I again experienced these touchings. They were confined to the side of my thigh. They were less distinct, and more gentle, and continued a less time, but were accompanied by a soft breeze gently fanning my forehead.

At my next interview nothing particular occurred beyond what I have already mentioned, except these things: one was, that at one time the rappings were as if by five or six persons at once, and with different sounds, some strong and vigorous, and some faint, as if by children; and the other was, that at our request the rappings changed from the floor to the table, and to different parts of the table, as we pointed out the spot.

The next interview had this peculiar feature. An old gentleman came into the room unexpectedly to us all, and laid upon the table a piece of paper, so folded as to conceal the writing, and asked an answer. He got one, and said it was correct, and that it related to an incident which had occurred sixty-eight years ago, and before any of the rest of those present were born, and which was known only to him.

I remark, *en passant*, that in my detail I am confining myself to an account only of the new features that were from time to time presented, purposely omitting those which were a mere repetition of what I have already mentioned, and some of which occurred at almost every interview.

About this time, as I was sitting one day alone at work in my library, the thought suddenly intruded itself upon my mind, that I must go to a person who was named and magnetize him, and I would receive a communication from a spirit in a higher condition than any who had yet communed with me. Now, as I had no acquaintance with that person, never having seen him but once, and then hardly exchanged ten words with him, and as I did not know how to magnetize him, never having seen the operation but once, I disregarded the impression. In a day or two it came again with great distinctness, and both times when I was

not thinking of the subject, but my mind was intently engaged on something else. After it had come the second time, I sought a rapping medium, and inquired about it. I was told that it was not, as I had supposed, my own imagining, but a direction that it would be well for me to heed. I accordingly sought an interview with the person named, who was a clairvoyant, a rapping medium, and a medium for physical manifestations. At the appointed time I met him, with a party of six or eight others, none of whom had I ever seen before. And much to my surprise I received a communication pointed directly to two trains of thought in my mind; one that had been there for some twenty-five years, and another that had been there some two or three months, but neither of which had I ever uttered, or even hinted at, to mortal man or woman. For some time they were spoken to as distinctly as if I had proclaimed them with a loud voice. I was startled, for here was to me evidence from which I could not escape, that my most secret thoughts were known to the intelligence that was dealing with me. There was no avoiding the conclusion. Reason upon it as I would, imagine what solution I might, there was the fact plainly before me, and I knew it. The conversation to the others present was an enigma. They did not understand it, nor could they, unless they had known the secret thoughts which furnished the text.

I confess this staggered me, and the more I thought upon it, the more inexplicable it seemed. I procured books on mesmerism, to see if I could find a solution, but still the fact—the fact was there. And, as if to confound all my speculations on the subject, on one occasion soon after that, when I was on my way to meet with a medium, I determined in my mind to ask a particular question, but I got no chance to ask it, yet it was answered by a direct communication made to me as distinctly as if I had uttered it aloud, yet no human being knew my purpose.

This, which was then so new and surprising to me, has since been of such frequent occurrence with me, and with

others, that it has become manifest as one of the strongest and most marked features of the whole matter—one which very soon becomes palpable to the inquirer.

The only thing in my next interview worthy of notice, in this connection, was this: After it was over, I was standing in the hall, near the foot of the stairs, receiving a pamphlet from one of the gentlemen. The raps came on the stairs as the medium descended, calling for the alphabet and spelling out a sentence, which directed me what to do with respect to an article in the book.

At my next interview, at which were present at least a dozen people, the communication was through a rapping and a clairvoyant medium. After it was over, there came the most remarkable physical manifestations which I had yet witnessed. I extract from my journal the account I then wrote of it, giving only the initials* of the persons present.

The scene that ensued, it is difficult for me to describe. It was new to me, and not without a sensation of awe.

The rappings directed G. and F. to stand by one door, and M. and K. by another. As soon as they had taken their stations, there was heavy pounding on the doors as if with a fist, and distant responses, as if in other parts of the house. The bell was taken out of M.'s hand and rung, and then put back again. This occurred several times in the course of the evening.

M. and K. were then slapped as with a hand on the shoulders. This extended then to others at that end of the room.

Those four persons were then directed through the rappings to return to the table. They did so, standing two on each side of it. The table, which was a long dining-table, then moved backward and forward several times. I had my arm resting upon it, and I could not be mistaken. Those four were then directed to get together in one part of the room, and several things were then done to their persons. Pins were taken out of the girl's hands, their hands were lifted and placed together, etc.

* I regret to be obliged to withhold the whole names, but I can not ask the parties to allow me to give them in full, for right well do I know how much obloquy, reproach, and perhaps injury they might be subjected to. By-and-by, when the world will consent that this, as well as any other matter of science, may be fairly investigated, this difficulty will be obviated.

They then returned to the table and passed around it, the rappings telling them when to stop and when to go on.

The slappings on the shoulders then resumed. The bell was again rung. Mrs. R.'s comb was taken out of her hair, and the hair suffered to fall on her shoulders.

I was touched a number of times, first in my neck, by a gentle push, as with the ends of the fingers. This was repeatedly done. I was patted on the head many times, as if by a gentle female hand. As I sat by the table, I felt a hand gently laid on my head and moved around and the last touch was several gentle taps on my arm.

These touchings of me were different from those experienced by the others. To me, they were very gentle, and imperceptible to others, while the others were loud and perceptible to all in the room.

The clothes of G. and K. and M. were pinned together in several places, and K. and M. were tied together by the arms with a pocket-handkerchief.

And now what shall I do? I have occupied a good deal of this paper—as much as I can well spare—with the details of my personal experience, and yet I have not advanced through the first two months of my investigations. Shall I give more of it, and where shall I stop? The ensuing twelve months were full of the same things, often repeating what I had already witnessed, and nearly always displaying some new feature. Can it be necessary that I should detail them all, or indeed any more of them? Things of the same character have happened to others—and some far more extraordinary than any thing I have witnessed. Many of them have already been given to the public in various forms; and there is not a neighborhood in the United States where any attention has been paid to the subject, where similar things have not occurred, and can be testified to by persons whose testimony would be received in any human transaction, so that nothing short of willful blindness can prevent their being seen and recognized.

It can not be necessary or wise that I should occupy much more time on this part of the subject. I will, therefore, give only one or two instances more, and pass to what I regard as far more important.

On the 28th of March, 1851, I was one of a party of ten

who were directed, through the rappings, to stand up in a circle in the middle of the room, and every one present was touched by this unseen power. Some were pulled down upon the sofa; one was pulled nearly on to the floor; one had her feet shoved from under her so that she nearly fell; a shawl was snatched from a lady's shoulders and thrown on to the floor; I was repeatedly touched on different parts of my person; chairs were pulled about, and a small table slid along of itself several feet on the carpet.

On the 23d of April, 1851, I was one of a party of nine who sat around a center-table, on which a lamp with glass pendants, was burning, and another lamp was burning on the mantelpiece. And there, in plain sight of us all, that table was lifted at least a foot from the floor, and shaken backward and forward as easy as I could shake a goblet in my hands. Some of the party tried to stop it by the exercise of their strength, but in vain, so we all drew back from the table, and by the light of those two burning lamps, we saw that heavy mahogany table suspended in the air. There was no mistake about it, and there were those present who were then, and are yet, unbelievers in spiritual intercourse.*

On the 7th of May, 1851, I was present with eight or ten others, when the loose pieces of paper on the table were taken from it, thrown into our faces, and on to the floor, and once, during the silence of one of the pauses, we distinctly heard the sound as of a pen writing on paper. We gathered up carefully all the pieces of paper, and examined to see if there was any writing on them. But we found none. Then it was spelled out to us through the rappings, "Look under the table." We did so, and there found a small piece of cartridge-paper, on which had been recently

* I appeal thus to the testimony of those unbelievers, not because I think it adds any weight to mine, but because I am aware that there are very many who seem to think that belief in the matter utterly disqualifies one from giving reliable evidence, and that it is utter disbelief alone that renders one worthy of credit, and that his testimony is the stronger and the better, that the disbelief is entertained in defiance of his senses.

written some hieroglyphic characters, unintelligible to us, and a remarkable feature of the transaction was, that there was no pen or ink in the room, yet the characters were written in ink and evidently recently.

One more instance and I have done with my detail of mere physical manifestations. I had been told through a medium to publish a statement of what I had witnessed; I declined to do so until I had more evidence, because I should thus pledge my character to the truth of this thing, and that I could not do until I was perfectly satisfied myself. I was asked what would satisfy me? I said, Evidence that this was not the product of mortal agency, evidence of the identity of those who professed to be dealing with me, and evidence that it was for a good and not an evil purpose. I was asked what evidence I would have? I replied, I can not say, for if I do, I tell you what to do. The answer was, You shall have evidence that shall satisfy you.

It was on the 21st May, 1851, that the evidence came, and in such form as to leave no doubt on my mind as to two of the points of my inquiries. It is impossible for me to give an adequate conception of what I then witnessed. But as beforesaid, as I am not aiming to convince others, and merely relating how I was convinced, I regret my inability the less. Yet what I can do to describe the scene, I will.

It was on an evening when the circle to which I belonged was to meet. As I was going toward the house in the east part of the town, I met the medium, his sister, and two or three others going toward the west part of the town. He told me that he had received instructions through the rappings to go to Mr. Partridge's, and he was accordingly on his way. He told me also, that when he had got ready to go, he had been told to wait fifteen minutes, and he had done so. I perceived that if it had not been for those directions I should have missed him, and should not have known where he was. And inasmuch as I was on my way to his house

at the time he received those directions, neither he nor I could imagine any other reason for them than to have him meet me. I accordingly determined to go with him. We found there a party of at least twenty persons, among whom were five mediums. We were surprised to meet each other; for we met without preconcert, and found upon inquiry, that we had been assembled by directions given to different persons in like manner with those given to the medium whom I accompanied. For three hours I there witnessed physical manifestations which demonstrated to me beyond all doubt that they were not produced by mortal hands, and were governed by an intelligence out of and beyond those present. It is vain for any one to say we were deceived. I knew that I was not, and so did every one of that large party. So is it vain to say the mediums did it, for they were actually more frightened at what occurred than we were, who were spectators, and essayed in vain to stop it. Then it was that the chair run back and forth on the floor, the bell was rung over our heads, and one of the party was forcibly torn by an invisible power from my grasp, in spite alike of his strength and mine. Through one of the mediums we were told, "Go to the front door and let them in," and when the door was opened an unexpected addition to the party, not one of whom was known to the medium, was found ascending the steps, but had not reached the bell. As I stood in a corner where no one could reach my pocket, I felt a hand thrust into it, and found afterward that six knots had been tied in my handkerchief. A bass viol was put into my hand and rested on my foot, and then was played upon. A violin was placed in my other hand and likewise played upon. Another violin was hung around my neck by one of its strings, and I was struck frequently with a fiddle-bow. My person was repeatedly touched, and a chair pulled out from under me. I felt on one of my arms what seemed to be the grip of an iron hand. I felt distinctly the thumb and fingers, the palm of the hand, and the ball of the

thumb, and it held me fast by a power which I struggled to escape from in vain. With my other hand I felt all around the spot where the pressure was, and satisfied myself that it was no earthly hand that was thus holding me fast, nor, indeed, could it be. No earthly hand could thus hold me, for I was as powerless in that grip as a fly would be in the grasp of my hand. And it continued with me until I had tried every means I could devise to get rid of it, and not until I thoroughly felt how powerless I was, did it leave me.

But enough of this in all conscience ; I have said sufficient to give an idea of the general character of what I was witnessing two or three times a week, with only occasional interruptions, for more than a year. And how could I help believing that what I saw was not the product of mortal agency ? I was not a believer seeking confirmation of my own notions. I was struggling against conviction. I have not stopped to detail the precautions which I took to guard against deception, self or otherwise. Suffice it to say, that in that respect I omitted nothing which my ingenuity could devise. There was no cavil too captious for me to resort to, no scrutiny too rigid or impertinent for me to institute, no inquiry too intrusive for me to make. So much so, that it was not unfrequently that believers were unwilling to meet with me, because of my querulousness.

These things did not all occur in the presence of the same medium or the same party of investigators, but often in the presence of mediums and others whom I had never met before, and who did not and could not know what I had witnessed.

At the same time, I was seeing in the newspapers and hearing from others, whose testimony I could not, as a rational man, disregard, accounts of transactions in various parts of the country, of similar general character, differing only in detail.

To make "assurance doubly sure," I instituted the scientific inquiries mentioned in my published address. The

gentleman whose aid I had on that occasion, was an officer of rank in the army, a graduate at West Point, and at one time an assistant professor there. He was one of high attainments and character, affording then to me, as they would now to others, if I could venture to name him, most satisfactory evidence of skill and integrity in our researches.

Now, under all these circumstances, what was I, as an honest man, blessed with common sense, to do? Had I a right to disregard the evidence of my own senses, enlightened by patient inquiry and the deductions of my own deliberate judgment drawn from that evidence? Aware as I was of the state of feeling which would make the reality of this thing so acceptable to me, and thus guarded against self-delusion, could I rationally overlook the fact that the same deductions flowed from the same facts in minds not liable to such a bias? Could I reject a weight of evidence that was allowed to prevail in all human transactions, and without which the earth would be a bedlam? If I did, on what was I to rest my judgment? What, indeed, but caprice, or arbitrary will, or the opinion of others! No, I could not thus trifle with my reason. The responsibility was too great, and I therefore brought to bear on this subject the same faculties which were daily at work within me, in passing judgment on the life, liberty, or property of my fellow-men, and the result at which I arrived was an inevitable one. And I venture to say, from all my observation in this matter, that such must be, as such has been, the result in every candid mind that will give the subject an impartial examination. It is this which daily causes hundreds who are convinced against their will, and in defiance of all preconceived opinions, to wheel into the spiritual column. It is this which causes the tide of spiritualism, fed from these thousand rills, to swell rapidly against the barriers of error and superstition. It is this, among other things, which tells me to beware lest these revelations be of God, and it be impiety to doubt them.

There was, however, another element in the phenomenon

which had immense influence with me, and that was the intelligence displayed by this unseen power. That was almost always manifested at every interview, and the question that obviously presented itself on the very outset was, whether that was from the mind of any mortal present, or from some other source? So that, even if it had been established that the sounds and physical manifestations of which I have been speaking were produced by mortal agency, still the question remained, whence came the intelligence that was displayed? For instance: What was the power that read the thoughts which I had buried for a quarter of a century in the depths of my heart? What the power that knew my interrogatory the instant it was formed in my mind? What the power that read the questions which I had written in the solitude of my study? What the power that revealed my secret purposes to the bystanders, and the purposes of others to me?

Before those questions could be answered satisfactorily, to me at least, the whole character of that intelligence, and all the phases and forms in which it displayed itself, must be understood. It seemed to me that it would have been rash indeed to have attempted to pronounce a judgment on one or two or a few exhibitions of it only. Nor did I; but carefully for months, aye! and now for years, have I watched it, and there is no possible solution of it that I can imagine that can bring it to any other complexion than that it is out of and beyond mere mundane existence—in other words, that it is super-terrestrial.

To enable others to judge, however, whether my conclusion was right, I must, even at the hazard of being tedious, detail some more instances of its manifestation.

The answering of mental questions and the statement of facts, which, there is every probability, are known only to the interrogator, are, and for four or five years have been, of such frequent occurrence, and have been witnessed by so many thousands and tens of thousands, that it is idle to dwell upon those to which, especially when the opportunity

of everybody's examining and witnessing for themselves is abundant all around us. He who ventures to deny their existence may as well deny the existence of the Crystal Palace, because, forsooth! he has not taken the trouble to go and see it. His wisdom is that of the driven sheep, which leaps over an unreal obstacle because another sheep has just done it before him; and of him, at least, it can not be truly said, "Never does nature open her breast before a worthy mind only that it may behold, and then fall asleep."

Other instances, however, of a kindred character may as well be mentioned. I will take as an instance the fact of my friends in New York being informed in regard to me, while absent last winter in my journey to Central America. The first time they heard of me, I had been at sea four days in a steamer. We were 800 miles from home, and in long. 73° 2' W., off the coast of Florida. We had spoken no vessels since we left our port, so that there was no possible way, by earthly means, by which people in New York could know how I then was, and what I was then doing; yet, at half-past nine o'clock that evening, the circle of which I had been a member being assembled, asked, "Can any spirit inform us of the condition of Judge Edmonds?" and it was answered, "Thy friend is well and doing well. His passage thus far is favorable, and his mind has been favorable. He is now thinking of the circle, and now enjoying conversation about you. I see him laughing and enjoying himself with the passengers," etc. I knew nothing of this till I returned home four months afterward, and then, having learned it, I compared that statement with the entries in my journal, and it was literally true, even to the hour. Four days afterward, while I was still at sea, no ship having yet been spoken, it was said with truth, through the same medium, "Your friend the Judge is not so well as usual, and he wishes himself in his own home again. He has been writing considerable, and it has brought on his old distress." Three days afterward they again heard of me, that I had "left the vessel, was on *terra firma*,

recruiting from the voyage," etc. Our voyage had terminated the previous day, and I had penetrated the interior about ninety miles. Twenty-two days afterward they heard of me again, among other things: "He is now traveling slowly, not being yet sufficiently inured to hardship to travel very rapidly. His head aches at present." On referring to my journal, I found that on the two previous days I had traveled one day four leagues, and the other day eight, and that at the very hour when that was said in New York, I was confined to my bed with a sick headache, more than 2,000 miles distant.

Now what is to be said about this? What solution is to be given of it? It was utterly impossible that that could be done by any mortal means that I know of. And whence came the intelligence that thus conveyed the verity of things then actually existing 2,000 miles distant? Will it be said that it was guessing? If it was guessing, it was, indeed, good, for it was done seven times during a period of four months—every time exactly right, and never twice alike.

I will give another instance. My daughter had gone with her little son to visit her husband's relatives at Ogdensburg, on the St. Lawrence River, more than 400 miles from New York. During her absence, and about four o'clock in the morning, I was told through this spiritual intercourse that the little fellow was very sick. I went to Ogdensburg after him, and found that at the very hour when I received that intelligence he was very sick, his mother and aunt were sitting up with him and were alarmed for the result. Was this also guessing, or my own imagining? When I was so told, I was not thinking of the boy, and yet the information I received was true.

I mention these things as happening to me, because I am giving my own testimony; yet I will confess that if they had happened to me only, I should hesitate in relating them, lest, perhaps, there might be some mistake about it; but we have accounts of many other similar instances

within the last three or four years, and from reliable sources, so that if human testimony is to be credited, they must be true.

Often have I witnessed this unseen power keep time to music that we were making; and once by rapping on my forehead with a hair brush, and at another time by rapping on a violin which I held in my hand, and keeping time to my singing, and changing the time as I changed the tune and the measure, which I did several times, and occasionally as abruptly as I could.

Once when we formed a circle, the first thing that was said was, "Now, Judge Edmonds, about your trouble?" I inquired what trouble? and it was answered by referring to a matter which had indeed been worrying me.

During the last illness of my revered old friend Isaac T. Hopper, I was a good deal with him, and on the day when he died I was with him from noon till about seven o'clock in the evening. I then supposed he would live yet for several days, and at that hour I left to attend my circle, proposing to call again on my way home. About ten o'clock in the evening, while attending the circle, I asked if I might put a mental question. I did so, and I knew that no person present could know what it was, or to what subject even it referred. My question related to Mr. Hopper, and I received for answer through the rappings, as from himself, that he was dead! I hastened immediately to his house, and found it was so. That could not have been by any one present, for they did not know of his death, they did not know my question, nor did they understand the answer I received. It could not have been the reflex of my own mind, for I had left him alive, and thought he would live several days. And what it was but what it purported to be, I can not imagine.

So on one occasion I was warned as to the character of a person in whom I was disposed to place a good deal of confidence. I thought there was some mistake, and I disregarded the warning, yet after some time, during which

the deepest cunning was displayed, I became indeed well satisfied the premonition had been correct.

The warning which Governor Tallmadge received, and which is mentioned in the following papers, is another instance. He was in my library in the city of New York, and was told of events which would happen, and which actually did happen after his return to his home in Wisconsin.

So I was told before sailing for Central America last fall, of several events which would occur during my journey, and which did occur.

So the destruction of the steamer Henry Clay, and the accident to the Reindeer on the Hudson River, last year, were both foretold before they happened.

On one occasion I had forgotten the name of a person in Michigan, to whom I wished a letter addressed on the subject of spiritual manifestations, and upon asking, it was given to me correctly through a medium.

Often when the party have been engaged in conversation, this invisible intelligence has taken part, as if it was a person present hearing what was said. Once I remember we were conversing about propagating this new faith, and it was spelled out to us by the rappings, "Sow only where the soil is prepared."

Once it was spelled out to the medium, "Edward, you seem to feel disposed to oppose us," and on inquiry, we learned that he was adverse to a measure which had been proposed, but he had said nothing about it.

Once a person present expressed his fears, that by avowing his belief in this faith he might be reduced to poverty and destitution, and it was spelled out, "Read the last ten verses of the sixth chapter of Matthew."

On one occasion the medium in New York was told that his sister was sick in the State of Michigan. A few days afterward he received a letter through the mail, giving him the same information.

I once asked a spirit what was the last event in life it

remembered, and what the first event happening 'here that it noticed after death? The answer detailed two events correctly, one of which happened about an hour after the breath had left the body.

I once mentioned that a dying person had whispered a faint "amen" to a prayer that was uttered. It was answered, "It was not to his prayer that I said amen, but expressing my resignation to the will of God."

At one time the answers were spelled out by moving the table, and not by rapping. A vial of water was put on the table; while it remained there the movings were very gentle, but both before and after it was there, they were vehement enough to have thrown it off.

I have frequently known the violence of the manifestations to be softened at the request that they would be more gentle, and so I have known them to be more vehement when requested.

A word was once used that I had never heard before. Some one present said that Mr. Davis had used it in one of his books. It was said, "Davis has not that term." On subsequent inquiry of him, I found that he never had used it, and had never heard it.

Sometimes when the party have got into discussion among themselves, I have known vehement manifestations made to stop it, and sometimes all communion ceased.

I have known them frequently to correct the minutes which had been kept of the proceedings of a circle; sometimes they would themselves make mistakes in doing so, and on having them pointed out to them would correct the mistake.

A communication was being spelled out by the alphabet, and I was writing it down. I wrote, "No one. Not wo." My mistake was not seen by any of the party, but it was corrected by spelling out "Number one. Number two."

Directions have been frequently given as to deportment and conduct at our meetings, as to put out and bring in a light, to open and shut windows or doors, to ask questions

and to be silent, to change our positions, etc., etc., precisely the same in all respects as we who were living and sitting there would talk to each other.

I have seen a person who knew nothing of music, except a little that he had learned at a country singing-school, go to a piano and play in perfect keeping as to time and concord the several parts of an overture to an opera; and Governor Tallmadge in a recent letter writes :

"My youngest daughter, aged thirteen, plays on the piano by the instructions of the spirits, like an experienced performer. She knows nothing of notes or music, and never played the piano before in her life. The first tune she played was Beethoven's Grand Waltz, and then several others with which we were familiar. After that, she played many we had never heard before, and improvised words suited to the airs, beautiful, and of the highest tone of religious and moral sentiment."

I have known Latin, French, and Spanish words spelled out through the rappings, and I have heard mediums who knew no language but their own speak in those languages, and in Italian, German, and Greek, and in other languages unknown to me, but which were represented to be Arabic, Chinese, and Indian, and all done with the ease and rapidity of a native.

Once a medium, who was a carpenter of very common education, was teaching us about self-knowledge. As I was writing down what he said, I spoke to myself in a low tone, *Γινώθι Σεαυτον*. He paused a moment, said "*Γινώθι Σεαυτον* ? yes ; know thyself."

And finally—for I must bring this long detail to a close, though it is only a small part of what I have recorded in five large volumes of manuscript, besides very many interviews which I have never recorded, because they were but a repetition of what I had already written—finally, I say, after spending two hours privately and alone with an individual, when I returned home I have had our private conversation detailed to me with an accuracy which startled me in its demonstration of the fact, that every word that

had been uttered in that private conversation was known to the intelligence that was dealing with me.

Now, in all that I have detailed, both as to the reality of the intercourse and its intelligence, though I have mentioned many things that are known to me alone, as well as many known to others, I have not mentioned a single thing whose equal or counterpart has not been witnessed by hundreds and thousands of intelligent and credible people. I am not therefore stating any thing peculiar to myself, though some things can, from the nature of the case, have my testimony alone to support them. But I am referring to matters which are known to thousands, which for the last five years have been occurring in the presence of great numbers in all parts of the country, and which are yet happening in our midst, and can be seen by all who will but take the trouble to see and to hear.

But I have not done with this branch of my subject, though happily I have got to an end of my wearisome detail. There are other considerations connected with it that ought not to be overlooked.

It is now about five years since the subject first attracted public attention. Though we discover now that for the previous ten or twelve years there had been more or less of it in different parts of the country, but it had been kept concealed, either from fear of ridicule or from ignorance of what it was. The first public demonstration, however, was about five years ago, through the family of Mrs. Fox, near Rochester, in the State of New York. Through them the manifestations were by rapping on the floor, or a table, and the intelligence displayed itself by selecting from the alphabet as it was called over, letter by letter, until words were spelled out.

For awhile this was the chief, if not only the mode of the manifestation, but since then other modes have been developed. I shall refer only to such additional ones as I have myself witnessed, there being, as I understand, several which I have never seen.

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Clairvoyance and Psychometry were, indeed, previously known, but not, that I am aware, much resorted to as means of spiritual intercourse, or, rather, not so much as they have been of late. Now, they are both of them modes frequently used for that purpose.

Some are mediums for physical manifestations; by that I mean the disturbance of the equanimity, if I may so term it, of material objects, without any intelligence being necessarily or usually communicated through them, but done apparently for the purpose of convincing the skeptical of the presence of some invisible, untangible power. In other words, for the purpose of addressing to our senses the idea of a physical communion with a power out of and beyond mere mortal agency.

Connected with this, in a measure, though with the addition of an intelligent communion between the mortal and the invisible power, are the mediums for table tippings, now becoming very common throughout the United States and in many parts of Europe,* and which are doing more than all else to attract general attention to the matter, and to awaken an inquiring spirit among mankind.

Another class of mediums consists of those who write. Their hands are affected by a power manifestly beyond their own control, and not emanating from or governed by their own will. The numbers of this class are rapidly increasing. A vast amount of matter has been written by them, which will yet be given to the world when it shall be prepared to receive it in a spirit of candid inquiry, and the mass is daily augmented through the instrumentality of new mediums who are being developed.

Another species are speaking mediums, some of whom speak when in the trance state, and some when in their normal condition. In these cases the invisible intelligence seems to take possession of the mind of the medium, and compel the utterance of its ideas, sometimes in defiance of

* I witnessed it last winter, also, in Central America and in Havana.

the will of the mortal through whom it is talking. I have seen one or two of this class, who seem to hear spoken words, and to perform their function by simply repeating what they hear. But generally they utter ideas impressed upon their minds, and not infrequently have their organs of speech controlled by a power independent of and at times in opposition to their own will.

✓ Impressible mediums are still another species. They receive impressions in their minds to which they give utterance, either by writing or speaking, their faculties being entirely under their own control.

The spectator, unaccustomed to this manifestation, would find it difficult to discriminate between it and the ordinary process of speaking or writing the medium's own ideas; but the mediums have generally no such difficulty, nor has the bystander who has become familiar with it, and also become acquainted with the mind of the medium and its ordinary operations. For instance, facts are thus communicated before unknown to the medium, coming events foretold, which are yet in the womb of the future, and thoughts are suggested at variance with preconceived notions, and often too profound and learned for the unlearned and sometimes simple mind on which they are impressed.

These considerations in some measure apply to the speaking mediums also, though there is more frequently some external sign of the power that is operating.

✓ Another, and the last kind of medium that I shall speak of, consists of those who see, or seem to see, the objects presented to their consideration. I do not mean that they actually do see with their physical sight, but the objects are so presented to them that precisely the same effect is produced on their minds as is produced by the habitual exercise of their physical organs of sight. An artist in a neighboring city lately wrote me that he, from being one who had thrown the matter aside as "a barefaced imposture, and who had spared no words in denouncing the whole

affair a stupendous fraud on the weak-minded and credulous," had become such a medium, and had had scenes presented to his vision which, he says, are "impressed upon his mind with extreme distinctness, more so than any picture he ever saw, and that they can not be his own imaginings—the manner of their presentation preclude that idea."

Among the following papers are several which were given through me, and it was in this manner that all were so given, except one, and that was more like the impressible medium.*

Such is the general character of this spiritual intercourse as I have witnessed it.

It is not practicable for me in the limits of this paper to detail minutely all those things which for nearly three years I have been witnessing, and the records of which now fill my volumes of manuscript. I must necessarily content myself with giving only a general view of it, and I do that the more readily, because I repeat my object is not so much to convince others, as to awaken in their minds such an interest as will induce them also to investigate, and thus to bring to bear upon the subject minds more fitted, from leisure and other causes, than mine to conduct such an inquiry as it seems to me the subject demands.

The facts which I have detailed gave rise in my own mind to several questions which will readily suggest themselves to others.

One of the first of those questions was this: What is this which I am witnessing? Is it a departure from nature's laws or in conformity with them? Is it a miracle, or is it the operation of some hitherto unknown but pre-existing cause, now for the first manifesting itself?

The answer I got was: It is the result of human progress, it is in execution, not a suspension, of nature's laws, and it is not now for the first time manifesting itself, but in all ages of the world has at times been displayed

* See *Appendix F*.

I reasoned then, If it is by a law of nature, it must be universal in its application, and it may be discovered and understood by man; and I asked that I might understand it. I was told, however, that my knowledge of nature was too imperfect to enable me to understand it as yet. I asked what I might read to assist me to the requisite knowledge, and I was referred by one present to Von Reichenbach's "Dynamics of Magnetism," and there I found that he had discovered a hitherto unknown power in nature. He named it Od, or Odic force, and described it as an exceeding subtile fluid, existing with magnetism and electricity, found in fire and heat, and produced in the human body by the chemical action of respiration and digestion and decomposition, and issuing from the body in the shape of a pale flame, with sparks, and smoke, and material in its nature, though so much sublimated as to be visible only to persons of a peculiar vision. In my experiments I have myself once or twice seen it, but have met with those who could see it as readily as those through whom that German philosopher conducted his examinations.

I was given to understand that this power was used in these manifestations, but how or in what manner I have not learned. I was also made to know that electricity and magnetism had something to do with them.

Upon that subject it was said to me, "Man physically is composed of one element in three distinct grades of perfection, which grades serve to form a link between the spiritual and physical worlds.

"It is an electricity, but more perfected than that with which you are familiar, that which you term electricity.

"The first or lowest quality which pervades the human system has an essential promotion to its formation, and is what may be termed the *vegetable motive element*. This is a better term to use than electricity, because you would otherwise associate it with electricity, as you see it in its common form, and that would give you an erroneous idea. This is one grade above the common electricity. Its sphere

or function is to give involuntary growth or action. It therefore is a most essential element of all the plant creation. It is to the vegetable creation what the soul is to the human creation. Nearly all nature has a greater or less degree of this element or quality.

"The next may be termed the *animal motive element*. This is still another grand grade or perfected form of electricity, and is that substance which is called magnetism. It is that which pervades the nervous system, and gives voluntary motion. It is that which gives life to the nerves, and which gives us sensation. This element is but one grade below the soul, and is that through which you receive instinct. Animals through this element show instinct which seemingly almost amounts to impressions. Still they are not impressions in reality, though nearly allied. The mind does not grasp the idea, but receives the instinct, and acts accordingly, but not from reason. As the vegetable element is the soul of plants, so this is the soul of animals. You will understand that I do not mean to convey the idea that plants or animals have organized, individualized souls, that will ever exist. Its organization is necessarily confined to organized bodies, and when the body becomes disunited, this element must be disorganized with it.

"Next is the *soul motive element*, which is the grand microcosm of all below the divinity. This is an element which baffles your efforts to analyze, as self can not investigate self. It is that element which forms man, and constitutes him an ever-existing, individualized being. It is superior to the animal element, and therefore exists independently of the physical body. It is the function of this element to individualize man, and gives to each one those peculiarities which may distinguish him from all others.

"The soul of the plant is positive to the plant, and negative to animals.

"The soul of animals is positive to animals, and negative to man.

"The soul of man is positive to man, but negative to God.

"The three elements of the extended universe combine to form man.

"This is man physically. He is superior to the lower organization of nature, because their superior element is his inferior element. The animal's positive is man's negative.

"These three qualities are with, or a part of, the soul after leaving the body. As we spiritually are formed much as you are physically, and as the vegetable is necessary to the growth, and the animal to the motive power, it must exist in the spiritual world, though much more refined and elevated."

In the course of my examination, I asked if I might not know how this odic force was used? I was told that it would be explained to me; and it was afterward attempted through the same medium by whose instrumentality I received the teaching which I have just written.

The manifestations on that occasion were of a very extraordinary character. I give them in the Appendix in the language in which he recorded them.* If my readers knew him as well as I do—if they were as well acquainted with the simplicity and uprightness of his character, they would be aware how firmly they might rely upon his integrity and intelligence. For my own part, I have never doubted the truthfulness of his statement.

This is as far as I have been able to advance in answer to this question. My attention was soon drawn to other matters, namely, to the moral character of the teachings, and I was compelled to leave that inquiry to others. I have related all I know on that subject, in the earnest hope that some one may pursue the investigation until we shall be able to understand it as well as we now do the steam-engine or the magnetic telegraph, for surely it must be that the knowledge is equally attainable by man.

But the law was universal in its action? and therefore

* See Appendix C.

it had probably displayed itself ere this, and now would allow the communion with inferior as well as superior spirits, and through mediums whose physical organization would allow it, whatever their moral condition. Thus it was I argued, and facts seemed to support the position.

In the first place I found that both sacred and profane history was full of accounts of what we are now witnessing. I need not refer to all that is written on that subject in the Bible. It will be enough that I refer to Hagar, Genesis xvi. ; to Abraham, Gen. xviii. ; to Lot, Gen. xix. ; to Jacob, Gen. xxxi. ; to Moses, Exodus iii. ; to Balaam, Numbers xxii. ; to Gideon, Judges vi. ; to Elijah, 1 Kings ; to Zachariah, Zach. i. ; to the two Marys at the sepulcher, Matthew xxviii. ; to the Virgin Mary and to the Shepherds, Luke i. ; and the opening the door of Peter's prison, Acts v. ; and to John, in Revelations xxii.*

The history of the primitive Christian Church agrees at least in this, that for three or four hundred years after Christ, spiritual intercourse was frequent among the believers, and its general diffusion seemed to cease only when the Church began to lose its purity, by being united with and fostered by government, when it was so affected by that union that it was difficult to tell whether it was Christianity paganized, or paganism Christianized, and when it plunged into the dark ages that followed the eruption of the savages of the North, and slumbered for a thousand years amid their gloomy light.

Yet even then, if we may credit the traditions and private histories of the Catholic Church,† it was occasionally manifest.

* The lesson there taught may well be borne in mind by spiritualists as by others. "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book. Worship God."

† I do not speak thus because I doubt the truth of these accounts, for I

After the Reformation, and the minds of men began to be somewhat freed from the restraints which the religious domination of centuries had imposed upon them, spiritual intercourse began again to display itself. But mankind in their ignorance knew not how to deal with it. Instead of meeting the intelligence rationally, as is now done, and asking whence and why it came, it was met with prayers and fumigations, and exorcisms in a dead language, nay! with the fagot and the scaffold. About 200 years ago, under the administration of one of the wisest of the English judges, hundreds were tried and executed for the crime of witchcraft. The act of 1, James I., ch. xii., against witchcraft, was passed when Lord Bacon, one of the greatest minds that England has ever produced, was a member of the House of Commons, and Lord Coke, one of her most distinguished judges, was attorney-general, and, in the House of Lords, was referred to a committee which contained twelve bishops. And Barrington, in his observations on the statute of 20, Hen. VI., says that 30,000 people were burned for witchcraft within 150 years.

In our country, too, where our sturdy ancestors planted amid savage wilds the seed of that freedom which now so overshadows the world, it displayed itself; and the history of Salem witchcraft is but an account of spiritual manifestations, and of man's incapacity to understand them.

In regard to other periods of time, it has been well said by one who marvels at our superstition in believing that which has the testimony of ages to support it, "In any age or period concerning which we have a legend, a record, or a history, we find some mysterious developments

do not. I am willing to make all allowances for delusion and imposture, yet my habits of thought have been such that I can not at pleasure disregard human testimony, especially when supported by irreproachable character. I can not satisfy myself by crying "delusion" or "imposture" as to facts that are established by testimony that has been accepted in all human transactions in all ages of the world, and must be, so long as mankind are to be governed by reason, and not by authority. I must weigh that evidence, and give it its just force and authority.

concerning man, his life, and his death. These phenomena have always astonished, but have never been accounted for. Egyptian, Chaldean, Grecian, and Roman history are prolific with statistics to sustain this position. Read Herodotus, Plato, Zenophon, Pliny, Livy, or any other Greek or Roman author from which we glean whatever information we possess concerning antiquity, and upon almost every page we find the writer discoursing upon mysteries, the work of an unseen agency, which he could not comprehend. Homer and Virgil sang about them; Socrates and the philosophers speculated upon them; Demosthenes and Cicero harangued about them in orations, and all were impressed with the same feeling of their incomprehensibility.*

In more modern times, we have, in the early history of the Quakers, the Shakers,† and the Methodists, evidences of the same sort of manifestations; and I have been struck

* Cicero declares his age indebted to such an unseen agency for many valuable discoveries in physic, for warnings, for predictions, and extraordinary deliverances; and he says, "I know not any one nation, polite or barbarous, which does not hold that some persons have the gift of foretelling future events."—Cicero *de Divinatione*, lib. i.

In Plato's "Apology for Socrates," he is made to say: "The cause of this is that which you have often and in many places heard me mention; because I am moved by a certain divine and spiritual influence, which, also, Melitus, through mockery, has set out in the indictment. This began with me from childhood, being a kind of voice which, when present, always diverts me from what I am about to do, but never urges me on.

"But this duty, as I said, has been enjoined me by the deity, by oracles, by dreams, and by every mode by which any other divine decree has ever enjoined any thing for man to do." "Cary's Works of Plato," "The Apology of Socrates," iii. See, also, "Crito; or, the Duty of a Citizen."—*Ibid*.

† The Shakers in this country are an organized band of between four and five thousand individuals, who for sixty or seventy years have lived in the full belief, and the frequent manifestation of, spiritual-intercourse as it is now displaying itself abroad throughout the world. They have superadded celibacy to it, as a matter which, in their view, aids in avoiding the selfishness which spiritualism seeks to eradicate. But the order, economy, neatness, and industry which so eminently characterize them, are living evidence of the falsity of the charge so often urged against spiritualism by the ignorant and the designing, that it tends to produce insanity.

in my researches with the remarkable resemblance between some of the incidents which are happening now, and those which happened one hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago.

Now these remarks are but a general allusion to the facts with which sacred and profane history both teem, going to show how, for thousands of years, mankind have been dealt with by an unseen and incomprehensible agency. And to me these facts prove, not that men for so many ages, and amid all their cultivation, have been deluded, and have not seen and heard what their senses told them that they had ; not that, with all their intellect, which has sent their wisdom down the stream of time to enlighten us, they have been the victims of an imposture which has taken their belief by storm, and which only ordinary sagacity might have detected, but that (herein agreeing with Dr. Johnson) there must be something in that which has thus challenged belief in all ages, and if so, that there must be in nature some such law as that whose operations we are now witnessing, and which we are told is thus universal through all earthly time and space in its domination.

In other words, to make myself understood, from this universality of the effect I infer the existence of the law, for it can not exist as a law of nature unless it has that universality, and if I did not find that evidence of its general operation, I should doubt its existence.

Again, I reasoned if the doctrine of this new philosophy is correct, that man is the creature of Progression, and that he does not instantly upon dying change into a state of perfection, but only into a condition where he can more readily progress toward perfection ; and if this law exists, and is thus universal, then it must be applicable and available to all disembodied spirits, as well those who have as those who have not begun to progress.

Now we find that to be the fact. The experience of almost every one who has gone into the investigation of this matter demonstrates this. Among the following papers

will be found occasional instances ; but our records contain many more, and show us beyond all peradventure, that at times ignorant, unprogressed, inferior, and sometimes positively mischievous spirits do commune with us through the instrumentality of this intercourse.*

I pass to another consideration which has much weight with me, and that is, the remarkable manner in which the distinctive characters of those professing to commune with us are delineated and preserved. Thus through a female, gentle, simple, unsophisticated, of not much education, and with no more than ordinary powers of mind, I have received communications purporting to be from different persons, each bearing the distinctive characteristic of the person professing to speak, each different from the other, and none of them like the qualities of the mind of the medium. It was utterly impossible for her to fabricate these manifestations. Her powers of mind were not equal to the task, nor do I believe that it was in the power of any human being to do so. Rapidly and instantaneously changing from one mind to another, and for two or three hours on a stretch preserving the distinct characteristics of each ! Why ! even Garrick in his best days, and after all previous preparation, could not have done it.

I will give from my records a few instances of this exhibition and preservation of the distinctive character of those professing to speak.

* I do not pause here to dwell upon the mischiefs that may flow from this consideration, or to utter any warnings against the consequences. That would be foreign to the purposes of this paper. I refer now, for some things relating thereto, to the following papers, *passim*, and I shall hereafter have occasion to speak more at large upon the subject. I will here merely remark, that much of the difficulty we encounter arises from our own erroneous notions as to the nature of spirit-existence, from the wild speculations in which, in man's ignorance, he has at all times indulged on the subject, and the almost impracticability in our material existence to comprehend the nature of that which is so much more sublimated and refined. But it is enough for the present, merely to refer to a correspondence, recently published elsewhere, and which will be found in *Appendix D*.

May 15, 1852, it was spelled out through the rappings, "The work goes bravely on. The great men of earth are engaged, and the self-conceited wonder at so much credulity. You have only to keep still and let the work go on. When the ignorant abuse and ridicule you, take no notice of what they say. God is omnipotent. You have a pilot at your helm that will guide you safely through."

I inquired, "What has produced this train of remark? It is not responsive to any thing we have asked."

"The *Herald* man's abuse toward you is one thing which you yourself have risen above. Still many are afraid your feelings are injured."

I inquired, "May I know who it is that is saying this to us?"

"Fennimore Cooper."

At the same meeting it was said: "Oh, my friends! how pleasant a thing it is to see brethren dwell together in unity! One week only have I spent in the holy society of just men made more perfect. Friends, bear with me a little longer. I came to tell you that a great and important development is about to be made to man. I have been blessed with the society of the poor depressed ones who met me on the shore of this blessed land and hailed me as their deliverer."

ISAAC T. HOPPER."

On 30th June, 1852, at Albany, it was written: "Brother Edmonds, you will do more good with spiritualism, than ever I did in politics. Go on. HENRY CLAY."

"There is joy in heaven at the opening of this intercourse with man. The spirits there never rest, they never tire. Be ye like them. Go on. Go on. Heaven shall crown your efforts," etc.

I remarked, that I wished I knew whether he believed in spiritual intercourse while in the body? He answered:

"I wish I had only told what I did believe. Oh, the darkness! Oh, the darkness! Preach away, every time you get a chance."

May 22d, 1852, against the earnest protestations of the medium, the following was spelled out to us through the rappings. I give it as it was written.

"You have got to hear my story fust. I am happy now, since I have larnt how for to wrap. You must pity my ignorance instead of laughing. I can tell you, I am sorry I lived as I did; but no decent man would speak to me when I wanted to reform, and now I am not abel to converse as wel as a littel infant, because I have nobody to larn me how. Now do remember the poor; and remember that poverty makes them bad. You must not pas them by."

He said his name was John Jones, and had died in this city the previous January, and he said: "I leived any where where they would keep me. Good-night, Sur."

The following purported to come from William Penn: "Purify thy physical system, and that will make thee more susceptible to spiritual influence. Thou art capable of doing much good to thy fellow-creatures, and relieving many sorrowing spirits in the body. Thy mission is an arduous one, and it is thy duty to fulfill it truthfully and faithfully."

"If the ignorant censure thee and believe thee not, heed it not. Thou wilt yet triumph over all, for thine will be the cause of truth. Don't be afraid to let the world know what thy belief is. Truth must prevail."

What purported to be Elias Hicks, said: "My dear friends, I have only to say to you this evening that you have done your duty to God, to the spirits, and to man in this instance, and you shall see before long time shall elapse that you shall reap benefit from the charity and good-will to the poor which ye have shown to the poor spirit who was in your midst to-night," etc.

And finally on this topic, I annex an appendix from Governor Tallmadge, bearing on its face unmistakable evidence of this identity of character of several who have made their mark on the age in which they lived,

and in which they have been actively engaged with him.*

But I must stop here too, long before I exhaust the stock of kindred matter with which my records are filled; not, however, till I call attention to the marked difference in thought and expression between the following papers purporting to be written by Bacon or Sweedenborg, and to the remarkable resemblance between the style of each in those papers, and that which characterized the writings of each when on earth. Any one at all familiar with their writings must be struck with it.

This, however, is not all. There is something peculiar about the handwriting. All that purports to come from Bacon is always in the same handwriting; so it is with Sweedenborg. The handwriting of each is unlike the other, and though both are written by Dr. Dexter's hand, they are both unlike his; so that with ease, when he is under the influence, he writes several different kinds of handwriting, and some of them more rapidly than he can write his own. This he can not do when he is not under the influence; and I have never seen any person that could, in his normal condition, write with such rapidity, at one sitting, four or five different kinds of handwriting, each distinctly marked, and having and always retaining its peculiar characteristic.

This, however, is not a peculiarity of the Doctor as a medium. It distinguishes most, if not all the writing mediums whom I have seen; and sometimes there is a very close imitation of the handwriting that marked the person when alive, though this is not always so.

There is another consideration which I ought to mention while on this topic, and that is, that as no two human beings are exactly alike, and as the medial power is more or less affected by the peculiar characteristics of the person used as a medium, so it must necessarily be that no two

* See *Appendix B.*

† See *Appendix A.*

mediums can be alike. And this is found to be so invariably. I never saw two mediums exactly alike, but always differing from each other with as minute and varying shades as mark the human character as it is exhibited daily before us, thus conveying to me strong evidence against collusion, and as strong of the naturalness of the whole manifestation.

And there is still another consideration which goes to show its naturalness, and that is, that like every other human faculty, either of body or mind (and this seems to be a mixture of both), it is capable of being greatly improved and perfected by exercise and cultivation. When a medium is being developed, it is very much like a child's learning to walk, to talk, or to write, and to use its arm; and the progress afterward, whether fast or slow, is like all our learning, dependent very much on the will of the scholar.

Now all these considerations are arguments to my mind, not only against the idea of collusion, but in favor of the proposition that this is what it purports to be, the product of a law of nature, universal in its operations, and now being developed by human progress.

Whether my deductions are right or not I leave others to judge. My object will be answered, if by stating the effect on my own mind I induce others to investigate also, and thus bring forth to view more of the knowledge of this hidden mystery.

Such was the phenomenon which I myself witnessed very frequently, almost daily, for a period of three years. At the same time I have received accounts of incidents of a similar character having occurred in various other parts of the country, witnessed by others with whom I had no acquaintance, and who I knew could not be acting in collusion with those who surrounded me. Aware of the impression it made on my mind, I looked abroad to see how it affected other minds, as thus I could be assisted in judging of the soundness of the effect produced on mine.

This I observed—they were most vehement in denouncing it as an imposture or a delusion who were most obsti-

late in refusing to witness it at all, who were most resolute in persisting in entire ignorance of all its features. The political demagogue who deemed it no sin to pander to the ignorance of the populace, sneered at it. The mountebank, aiming to replenish his coffers by his juggling tricks, professed to expose it, or at least to liken it to the sleight-of-hand by which he earned his daily bread. Men possessing character for education, if not learning, hazarded that character by explanations which satisfied no one, and which were founded on investigations whose superficiality would have shamed a child. They who claimed to be our spiritual teachers and guides, and to whom we naturally looked for instruction and advice in a matter seemingly at least within the scope of their calling, either refused to examine it, or carelessly and slightly looking at it, ventured to condemn. They were daily sending up the prayer, "Thy kingdom come;" and when many who hungered for its coming pointed them to these things, as perhaps indications of its advent, they answered by denouncing without investigation, and, as of old, asked, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" When affectionately and earnestly entreated to examine, that they might guide us by their wisdom, they contented themselves by advising us to abstain from looking into it, and be satisfied with our ignorance. And many, very many, either refused to know any thing about it, or denied their belief from fear of the ridicule which was so unsparingly poured out upon those who did believe or would investigate.

My mind was so constituted—fortunately or otherwise, no matter—but it was so constituted, that none of these things would satisfy its cravings for a knowledge of what this was, this novel and most extraordinary phenomenon, this new power connected with man, and evidently capable of wielding a mighty influence for good or ill over him, and I turned with unfeigned sorrow from such a mode of treating a grave and most important subject to contemplate the other aspect of the picture.

I saw that that which had its origin among the poor, the humble, the obscure, had in half a decade spread among mankind with a celerity which the Christian religion had not equaled in a hundred years. I saw that it sought no private haunts, enveloped itself in no useless mystery, but came out boldly before man, challenging his closest scrutiny. It sought no blind faith, but demanded always, and under all circumstances, the exercise of calm reason and deliberate judgment. I saw that the "exposures" of the philosopher and the mountebank were alike unavailing to turn back a single believer, that the denunciations from the political rostrum and the pulpit were alike powerless to arrest its progress, and that ridicule, all-powerful, because almost universal, was yet unable for one instant to retard its onward march. I saw that wherever it received the investigation it so earnestly demanded—calm, wise, deliberate investigation—it never, never failed to work conviction. I saw that it sent forth no preachers, it sought no proselytes, aimed at building up no sect, yet that thousands upon thousands of free, intelligent people were daily crowding its ranks. I saw many, very many shrewd, calm, and capacious minds examining and never failing to believe. I saw the Atheist bowing to its supremacy, and acknowledging his responsibility to his God and the future. And I saw without an exception that the believer was wiser and better, both as to God and his fellow.

All this I saw—this consonance with the laws of nature and of God, these marks of a divine origin—and I could not resist the conclusion: this is indeed of God, and man may not withstand it!

And I asked myself, if this is indeed so, why has it come now? What is the great lesson it is designed to teach, and how is it to have a practical influence on the conduct and condition of mankind?

This was an inquiry not so easily answered as the others, for it required the manifestation of an intelligence far above that which showed itself in rappings, or tipping of tables,

or disturbing material objects, and the conditions to permit the manifestation of that intelligence must be quite different. Still it was not impracticable, though more difficult and laborious, and the answer is now about being given to the world.

Oh, how sad is the mistake of him who, from a superficial examination, ventures to pronounce it all evil! He may as well enter the dens of iniquity in this great city, and hearing amid its festering wickedness the mingled shout of blasphemy and ribaldry that will ascend before him, thence infer that such is the character of this whole community. As well, when finding fanaticism, ignorance, and bigotry among the churches, may he condemn all professors as alike wanting in charity and in knowledge; or observing, as he can not fail to have done, how many absurd creeds have flourished, and have faded in the Christian world, he may as well insist—as, alas! too many have done—that the pure religion of Christ is a farce.

He will find precedent for such a mode of reasoning in the olden time, but he will also find an abiding condemnation of it in the after ages, through which mankind have progressed onward in knowledge and power.

As I have already said, I was early impressed with the importance of ascertaining whether this intelligence thus mysteriously working among us was for good or evil, and I watched the character of its teachings with all the astuteness I was capable of.

It is true, I have sometimes heard, and sometimes heard of, vague, trivial, and absurd communications, but never any positively mischievous. On the other hand, their general character has been such as to warrant me in saying that I “have been struck with their beauty—their sublimity at times—and the uniformly elevated tone of morals which they teach. They are eminently practical in their character, and not a sentiment is to be found that would be unacceptable to the most pure and humble Christian. The lessons which they teach are those of love and kindness, and are address-

ed to the calm, deliberate reason of man, asking from him no blind faith, but a careful inquiry and a deliberate judgment."

I extract from my records some specimens of the character of the teachings; but here again I am restrained by the limits of this paper from giving more than a few brief extracts from the copious records we have on this subject.

Once it was asked of the spirit who was communing, "Your condition being one of happiness, to what do you owe it? And it was answered, "To my love and kindness, to my disinterested regard for others, and to my blameless life."

At another time it was said, "Imitate Christ in his humility, in his submission to the will of God, and in his love to man, and you will be acceptable to God."

It was once asked, "What is the repentance which can work forgiveness of past wrongs?" And it was answered, "Sincere sorrow alone and confession to God accompanied by such acts of atonement as the occasion may demand."

On one occasion, when speaking of the religion which Christ taught, it was said, "It is that God is love. In every situation of life this evidence is conclusive, that God loves every thing he has created. Aye! every object of his handiwork proclaims this truth, that love eternal, undying, is the very source of all his works. Every man in every condition assents to this doctrine, and go where you will, converse with savage or civilized, you find that the basis of every faith is this axiom."

It was once said to us, "My dear friends, to-day two spirits came to join our happy circle. One was laid out in costly apparel, while the other was thrown in his coffin with his worn garments, and jostled to the grave in an old cart. No tear of sympathy was shed for him, while the rich man was mourned and missed by those who loved him on earth. But behold the contrast! The poor old man was received kindly by the dear friends in heaven who loved and watched over him, and fondly clasped to the

bosom of his dear companion, whose memory lived in the heart of her husband. The rich man was a stranger in a strange land. He had no kindred friends to greet him there. He beheld the poor beggar whom he had driven from his door cold and hungry now enjoying all the luxuries of the spirit-world, and he could not even approach to ask forgiveness."

I asked, "What produced this difference in your sphere in their condition?" "The acts and lives they lived on earth."

"What were those of the poor man?" "He was honest, and lived up to his best light."

"What the rich man's?" "He reveled in luxury, and never remembered his duty toward God and man."

It was once said to me, "Mankind need encouragement. Long enough have hideous monsters stood in the way. With the mass of mankind fear has had the ascendancy, has chilled every aspiration, darkened every hope, and made them wish that annihilation was their future destiny."

"Fear of God is a terrible fear. The soul shrinks within itself in contemplating the jealousy of an omnipotent God. Every nerve thrills with unutterable anguish at his anger, and many have wished that God had never existed, or had never caused them to exist."

"Your duty will be to lead the mind away from these theological errors; they have warped the soul too long already."

And again, "The kingdom of heaven must become like little children; it must be true to nature. The spirit-world acts true to nature, and hence its harmony."

"Love is the fulfilling of the law. Where love reigns no other law is needed."

"As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive, means that Adam represents the physical and Christ the spiritual part of man."

"Whoso believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life, means to believe in the doctrine of Christ, not

his person, in the spiritual condition of man and his eternal progression, which Christ came to teach and did teach."

At another time, "The spirits see and rejoice at every deed of kindness to humanity that you perform."

And again, "Wouldst thou know more of heaven—know more of the spirit-world. Wouldst thou be happy in the performance of thy duty? Be guided by the spirit of love, and justice, and equity, and angels will follow thy footsteps, and good spirits surround thee."

Once it was said to others, in my presence, "To see the friends we love on earth happy, adds greatly to our happiness here."

"These manifestations are given to mankind to prove their immortality, and teach them to look forward to the change from one sphere to another with pleasure."

"There are great changes now being made. The spirits of just men made more perfect are knocking at the door of your understanding, and the work which God has commenced will bear its way gloriously. No human power can hinder its progress."

At another time it was written: "Things which are spiritual are veiled in things which are material. Still God is equal to the consummation of all things. The principle of progress is consistent with his nature; and life, both of spirit and body, in earth and in heaven, is but the revelation of himself."

"What are man's duties, then, but to assist boldly and without fear the action of those elements of which the germ itself is God? Thus let no man fear to speak the truth; why should he fear who is assisting God?"

Again it was said, in answer to a question, "What is beginning to progress?" "No one can begin to progress until he has correct ideas of the future existence; and it is only when not in error on that subject, only when knowing our spiritual nature and destiny that we begin to progress."

"No spirit gathers more vicious propensities after death. Like the sponge filled with water and shaken in the hand,

it scatters its contents all around in all directions, but it gathers no more, and in time it will be dry. The time may indeed be long, but the end is sure to come."

And once it was said, purporting to be by Mrs. Hemans, "It is a very glad, beautifully, heavenly-inspiring thought, the communion of spirits with mortals, and as I realize it I become strengthened with an influence that descends like a mantle of light upon my soul, enabling me to express thoughts that would gush forth overpoweringly. Ah! deeply do I feel the high, the holy privileges which ye enjoy, and I would say, though with a feeble voice, prize them highly. Let your hearts become pure as those of angels, that angels clothed in light may descend into your midst and scatter gems of thought and of joy on your waiting souls."

And still at another time, "Purify thy heart that it may become the abode of spirits who live in an atmosphere of purity, and thou wilt feel how great the mercy, the goodness, the glory of thy God."

Once it was said to me through a medium in the trance state, "Far away in the deep of space, within whose boundless vortex all human thought is lost, there extends a mighty, blazing, and eternal sun. That sun contains the forces, elements, and materials from which all this magnificent temple of nature has been formed, and around that sun, as an inconceivable center, roll worlds and systems of worlds in beautiful and unbroken harmony. From that sun all material existences have had their birth; from that material bosom these rolling orbs have sprung.

"This great creation has but just begun, and now orb after orb, world after world, sun after sun, are rolling out into the abyss of space, as burning gems from the throne of the Omnipotent.

"Thus this universe of beauty and order and harmony sprung from chaos, and now there are eyes looking down upon the chaos of this earth, and they see here too, as well, is contained the germ of a majestic spiritual universe.

From all this darkness shall proceed a spirit, holy, hallowed, and divine. From all this confusion shall spring forth a divine harmony, and from the wreck of this discord shall be erected a temple not made with hands, whose foundations shall rest on the everlasting depths of the universe, and whose dome shall rise to heaven's high throne, within whose hallowed walls angels shall rest, and beside whose holy altars mortals shall worship forever."

And yet again was it said, "Men have sought for truth with eager and earnest minds, but sought for it where it does not exist.

"The senses of the body have been regarded as the medium through which the soul has looked out on the beauties of the visible universe. Hence men have regarded the material as the real. That which they could see with their eyes, hear with their ears, feel by their senses, they have thought the substantial reality.

"They have looked upon the universe as a glorious temple in which man was born to live and die, and when they have looked out upon its light-bathed surface and up to its starlit dome, they have regarded it as a great theater of light in which each must perform his part and pass to rest.

"But, oh, there is something deeper and more beautiful than this! There is something back of the glory of the stars, something back of the changeling forms of earth.

"The great divinity lives in this expanded temple, and all outward things and thoughts, all light, all beauty, all life, are but the feeble, external expression of the internal and ever-living reality.

"Oh, beautiful is this inward world which the senses may not perceive. Deep as the unfathomable depths of infinity is the realm of spiritual life. High as the majestic sphere of heaven leads the pathway of unending progress. And here in this great world of life and thought and being is the sphere of the soul's development.

"In this inward world dwells the divine reality for which

men have sought in vain in the outward. Here is the truth which makes its appeal to the living soul. Here is the light which cheers and gladdens the inward vision. Here the life that flows in never-ending streams down into the depths of the human spirit."

But enough of this, and to spare. Yet it is not a thousandth part of what has been said and written of a kindred character, and which will yet be given to mankind when they shall be so ready to receive it, as to open to its advent the portals by which they may be reached. From what I have just said, from the numerous books which constitute the spiritualists' library, and which so few among those who condemn the cause will deign to read, and from what ensues in these pages, some idea may be formed whether the teachings of this new revelation are not indeed fraught with man's eternal happiness—are not pregnant with matter tending to make him wiser and better.

And is it indeed evil? Let the glad shouts which ascend from unnumbered Atheists, converted to a belief in God by its instrumentality, answer. Let the many minds, floating wildly on the troubled sea of contradiction and inconsistency, caused by the conflicting doctrines taught from a thousand pulpits, as they enter the haven of certainty and rest on its placid waters, answer. Let the mourner who has been comforted, the sinner who has been redeemed, the doubter who has been convicted, the erring one who has seen and amended the evil of his ways, answer. Let the prayer of thankfulness and joy which ascends from the thousands and tens of thousands who find happiness and virtue in its teachings, and shadow it forth in their daily walks in an increased love for their fellow-man, answer. Let the countless numbers who find in this new dispensation the consolation and repose which their souls have sought for in vain in the prevailing theology of the age, answer. And, answering, let the doubter pause ere he maligns that which is but performing his neglected work, and redeeming a portion at least of his downfallen fellows.

But these general remarks are not, I am aware, all that the occasion requires at my hands, and I must therefore for yet a little while be more specific.

And, 1. The existence of man after the life on earth is demonstrated beyond all peradventure. I have sought in vain for the first candid and honest inquiring mind that has gone into the investigation of this subject, that has not received the most irrefragable evidence of this fact. How can it be otherwise? Here is an intelligence speaking to us daily, that over and over again establishes its identity with that of our friends who have gone before; facts are mentioned or referred to which the investigator knows can not be known to the channel through which they are communicated; thoughts are uttered which it is certain can not emanate from any mortal source known to or conceivable by us. Hence it is that so many, so very many, who have either doubted or absolutely denied the existence of a future state, have been convinced in spite of themselves, against their will, and in defiance of all preconceived notions. Some of these are men who have grown grey in the belief and the avowal of the doctrines of infidelity, and have yielded up reluctantly the cherished thoughts of a long life. Hence, too, it is, that many, embarrassed by the conflicting teachings on this subject, which they have received from the sources ordinarily surrounding them, who have been in a state of painful doubt, which they could imagine no means of solving, have found a resting-place for their tired souls.

These cases are very numerous. They are found in almost every hamlet where the subject has excited any attention. My own correspondence has poured upon me a flood of such cases.

Now what is it that has produced this effect—an effect which the 36,000 pulpits in the land, with their countless sermons, have failed to produce? It is not our missionaries whom we have sent forth into the barren wastes of the earth to preach our faith. But it is the manifestations

which they have witnessed for themselves, and which have wrung from them an unwilling belief.

Let no man deceive himself by saying, This is fancy's sketch. The evidence is at hand and all around us. He who runs may read it, and he must be blind indeed who does not see it.

2. That we are not by death separated from those whom we have loved on earth, but that during our life they are ever around us and ministering to us, and that by our purity of life we may be re-united with them, is also equally demonstrated. How often have I witnessed this! How often have I had it communicated to me from others! Had it been manifested in my own case alone, I might have thought less of it. But I have seen it so frequently with others! Nay, I have rarely seen it otherwise, and it has indeed been frequent that the heart of the mourner has been comforted by the consciousness from which there was no escaping, that the loved ones whose loss has been mourned have been "drawn back by the cords of love and hovered around his pillow, breathed in his ear and wept upon his bosom, and gazed upon his soul and communed with his spirit."*

3. It has also been demonstrated what death is, and thus it has been robbed of the undefined and mysterious terrors which have been thrown around it, by those who have been more willing to appeal to the degrading passion of fear than the elevating sentiment of love.

And here it is worthy of remark, that whatever discrepancies may be otherwise found in the teachings of this new philosophy, upon this point there is no difference. Death is to the rational mind only "a phenomenon to be investigated, not a bugbear to frighten." To the pure and good it is but a continuance of existence, freed from the thousand ills of our material life, freed from the restraints which confine it to a single planet, and is a condition where the pure spirit is left to roam amid the universe of worlds, free to

* In *Appendix G* will be found one among many instances.

choose its abiding-place where the glory of the Godhead is most manifest.

4. It is demonstrated that our most secret thoughts can be known to and be revealed by the intelligence which is thus surrounding us and communing with us. I had heard in the course of my life a similar thought frequently uttered from the pulpit, but I confess I could not realize it. But now it comes in such a form that there is no room to question it. I can not doubt it if I would. I have myself been often startled, and have seen others shrink within themselves at the consciousness thus thrust upon them, that the very deepest deep of their hearts was thus known.

Here there can be no mistake. Each can see and judge for himself. And I advise no man to go into the investigation unless he is prepared to have the most secret recesses of his mind penetrated and laid bare to his own view, and perhaps to that of others; for so sure as the sun shines at mid-day, so sure will this conviction be wrought upon him, if he will but afford the opportunity.

And if this is so, can there be a more powerful barrier against the admission of impure thought? Can there be any greater incentive to purity, or any greater restraint upon impurity, than the thorough conviction of the reality of this knowledge, the conviction that the most concealed recesses of our hearts may thus be penetrated by those whom we have loved most on earth?

For my part, I confess I can conceive of none, and I have more than once witnessed its tremendous effects upon those on whom the conviction has been wrought, and to this it is that I mainly attribute the unquestionable fact that there is no thorough believer in Spiritualism who has not become a wiser and better man.

5. So, too, it is demonstrated that our conduct in this life, in a great measure, elaborates our destiny hereafter, and that our happiness in the next stage of existence depends not upon our adherence to this or that sectarian faith, but upon the purity of our life here, and our obedience according to

the lights we have to the great law of loving God and one another. It is no vicarious atonement which is to redeem us, but we are to work out our own salvation. Thus striking once and for aye a fatal blow at the pernicious doctrine which has so long tempted man to defer the day of repentance to a future time. *Now* is the accepted time. *Now* is the day of our salvation. And can there be aught more cheering and encouraging to the virtuous, amid the trials and vicissitudes of life, than the thorough and well-settled conviction that his future existence is to be happy or otherwise according to his conduct, which he can control, and not according to his faith, which he can not?

In connection with this, while on the one hand it holds out to the pure a never-ending and still-increasing happiness, so on the other it denounces against the willfully vicious, the hard, the cruel, the selfish, the worldly man, a condition of self and mutual torment more revolting than any material hell which man's imagination in its wildest flights ever painted.*

6. We are taught the grand doctrine of PROGRESSION, whereby we learn that as the soul of man is an emanation from the germ of the great First Cause, so its destiny is to return toward the source whence it sprang. That man, neither here nor in any future existence, is governed by miracle, but only by universal laws which were from the beginning and have no end, and in which there is no turning nor shadow of change; that in obedience to those laws man does not, on dying, become instantly changed into a state of perfection on the one hand, or of degradation on the other, nor is he condemned to a long and dreamless

* On one occasion it was said by what purported to be the spirit of one who had been executed for murder, who retained a very vivid recollection of the scene of his execution, rendered more horrible by his despair, by his reluctance to leave the world in which he said he had "led a jolly life," and by his intense hatred toward those through whose instrumentality he had been brought to his end, that far down in the gloomy regions where he had dwelt, his dark companions, mid shouts and laughter at his agony, had daily acted before him the terrible scene of his execution.

sleep of ages, but passes into a state of existence where the evils of his material life being thrown aside, he is more capable of entering upon and advancing in the great object of his creation; and that that object is Progression onward, upward toward perfection forever.

And, lastly, we are taught what is the state of existence into which man is ushered after the life on earth. As under the Mosaic dispensation mankind were taught the existence of one God, rather than the thousand gods with mortal attributes then worshiped, and as under the Christian dispensation they were taught the immortality of the soul and its existence forever, so now, under this new dispensation, it is being revealed to them, for the first time, what that state of existence is, and how in this life they may well and wisely prepare to enter upon that and make it either undescribably sorrowful or inexpressibly happy.

Such are the great truths which I have gleaned from my investigation of this most momentous subject, and I confess that I enter upon the task of laying them before my fellow-men with no ordinary fear and trembling, lest I may be unequal to the great task on which I have ventured, and may in my weakness mislead rather than wisely guide.

I have, however, this abiding consolation, that I am not speaking of matters which are revealed to me alone. I am not dwelling on things which come through channels which are accessible to me only, but in a matter which is open to all alike, which all may investigate and learn as I have, and where the means of correcting any error into which I may have fallen are within the reach of any one who will choose to examine for himself, with the same earnest and fearless desire for the truth which has actuated me. Nay, more! in which I am persuaded that as time rolls on, and man's true nature becomes more developed, increased facilities for investigation will be afforded, and such examinations will be made as will test the truth or falsehood of what I teach. In these thoughts I have indeed a solace, as they assure

me that I can not permanently injure where my only desire has been to do good.

But for my own part I will frankly confess that there has been wrought in my mind the thorough conviction that these revelations, so important to man, are indeed of God, and that they spring only from an earnest desire in an unseen intelligence "to open to the world the truths of another life; to aid in removing from the eyes of the willfully blind the scales of error, prejudice, and superstition; to give man a hope, which is not dependent on the denunciations of the priest, that there is a better life beyond the grave—a life in which the spirit unfolds its wings, and soars to regions where the Spirit of God is indeed manifest; to remove that fear which bows the stoutest heart, and renders the firmest mind a ready believer in the fallacies which are taught as God's revelation, and to bring all religion to one simple point, that God is indeed sufficient in himself to the perfection of that which is of himself."

Aside from the nature of the revelations themselves, and their entire coincidence with all of nature that we see around us, and aside from many considerations already mentioned, there are others which tend to produce this conviction in my mind.

As came the dispensation through Christ, so comes this, in a state of almost universal peace, when men's minds are at liberty to receive, to examine, and to understand it; in a state of great refinement and intellectual advancement, when human thought is fitted to investigate and comprehend it.

The former dispensation passed through a thousand years of darkness and superstition, and has emerged through an age of infidelity into one of inquiry more bold, more free, and more successful in diffusing knowledge among men than the world has ever seen; into one where truth is indeed free to combat error and all-powerful to overcome it.

Eighteen hundred years have rolled into the bosom of eternity, and millions of human beings have passed from

the earth, who have never heard of the doctrines of Christ, and there are now millions living on its surface who are equally ignorant.

Nay, more! there are millions yet living who have heard, but do not profess to believe. Throughout all Christendom, how few are there who believe, or live as if they believed, the pure and holy religion taught by Christ! But their souls long for something which shall satisfy the cravings that have sought consolation in vain amid the mysticism which meets them at every step.

The Christian world is divided into sects, and torn by internal dissensions, seeming to have no common platform but that of hatred toward each other.

The intelligent and educated classes are mostly—secretly or otherwise—led by the conflicting doctrines taught around them to be unbelievers.

There is now greater mental freedom throughout the earth than was ever known before in its history.

The discoveries in nature and in science which have marked this age above all others, while they have shaken the belief of many in the popular theology of the day, as expounded by some, have removed from men's minds the absurd ideas of supernaturalism which had so long cast its dark pall over them. They have done more; they have opened to his view a boundless universe of worlds, peopled by sentient beings, who, like him, must be candidates for immortality, and thus presented to his mind more just conceptions of the attributes of the great Creator of all.

The human mind thus prepared for its advent, this new dispensation comes to supply the want to the countless thousands who are now slumbering in indifference or toiling in infidelity; to teach man his origin, his duty, and his destiny; to convict him of his immortality, and instruct him how to make it happy; to open to his view the great doctrine of progression, involving an eternity of action, and the supremacy of his reason over the besetting propensities of his material nature; and to impress upon him forever

the precept to love God and his fellow. It comes not with the fagot and the sword, but with healing on its wings, at once the Redeemer and the Comfortor; not in a distant and subjugated province, but amid a mighty people, who are free to receive and embrace it; not to a few obscure men in lonely places, but everywhere broadcast throughout the whole civilized world, and among all classes; not to be taught covertly amid the caverns of the hills or the dens and vaults of imperial Rome, but openly in the face of God and man, challenging investigation; not asking a blind faith or dependence upon authority, but the exercise of man's most Godlike quality, his reason; not appealing to the base passion of fear, but to the ennobling sentiment of love; not to destroy, but to save; not to punish, but to redeem; not to sow discord and build up sects, but to heal the divisions among the followers of the lowly Jesus, and afford a common platform on which all may assemble.

Thus it comes, with its Nicodemuses privately and in the night time, asking how these things can be; perhaps, too, with its Peters to deny, and its Judases to betray it, but amid all, giving a peace which the world can not take away.

J. W. EDMONDS.

NEW YORK, September 1, 1853.

Appeal.

TO THE PUBLIC:

On my recent return from an excursion into the country, I found that during my absence a decision lately pronounced by me had been seized upon as an occasion for an attack, in several quarters, on my religious belief. I was fully aware that that judgment, running counter as it would to popular sentiment, would subject my action to severe criticism, but I confess I did not anticipate that thence would flow an assault on my religious opinions. Were I a private citizen I should content myself with merely claiming the right which belongs to every one in this country, of entertaining such faith on this—the most important of all topics—as my conscience might dictate. And as it is, I might perhaps rest satisfied with challenging those who assail me to point out a single article in my creed that aims at aught else than exalted private worth and public virtue. But as the position which I occupy renders the soundness as well as the integrity of my judgment a matter of public interest, I am bound to acknowledge the right of others to question my faith, and my own obligation to defend it.

I acknowledge a still further obligation. And inasmuch as I accepted my present position under the implied understanding at least, that I believed in the Christian religion, and would administer our civil law according to the principles of the Divine law as it had been revealed to us, on which all our institutions were based, so I am bound to certify to those who have intrusted me with the Divine attribute of administering justice among men, that my reverence for that revelation has not been shaken, nor my obedience to that moral law impaired.

I have not, however, waited for these assaults, to be impressed with these obligations, but have already so far felt them, that I have prepared to publish a volume on the subject, which, but for my other avocations, would ere this have been in the printer's hands. To

that I must refer for much in elucidation and proof of my belief, which the limits of this communication will not now allow me to dwell upon, and content myself on this occasion with such general statements as may tend to give a correct idea of what it is that I believe or have done. Even this would not have been necessary, if those who assail me had but done me the justice themselves to have published any thing I have said or written on the subject. But hitherto I have been able to reach the public only through publications of very limited circulation; and the wildest and most erroneous notions have therefore been imbibed as to my belief, and the mischief has been increased by the recklessness with which erroneous statements have been fabricated by those who could not know them to be true, but who could easily have ascertained them to be false.

Thus one writer, with a want of feeling not perhaps surprising, speaks of my consulting my dead wife in making up my decisions. Another says, that it is "rumored" that I have consulted spirit manifestations in regard to my decisions. Another, that my belief is "at irreconcilable variance with all divine revelation, and is fit for no other system than devil-worship;" and still another, that "it constitutes an abandonment of all self-control, and a surrender of the supremacy of reason, as informed and enlightened by the senses, to the most nonsensical jugglery."

All these statements are as wide as they can be of truth, and I might with some justice complain at being subjected to such grievous imputations, merely because I had made a decision which was unacceptable to a portion of the community. But it is not for the purpose of complaining that I sit down to write. I am aware that it is not so much me, as it is the faith which I profess, which is the object of attack. It is "the mighty theme, and not the inconsiderable advocate," which offends. I am also aware why it is that so much error exists in the public mind on that subject, and my whole purpose is, so far as I am concerned, to correct that error; to state truly, as far as I can in this connection, what it is that I do believe, and generally the grounds on which my belief is founded, that all who take interest enough in the matter to read what I may say, may have the means of judging for themselves as to what I really do believe, rather than what others erroneously impute to me as a belief.

I am sincerely grateful to my assailants for not imputing to me any unworthy or selfish motives, for conceding that as a private

citizen I "stand exempt from public criticism," and that I am "not a fool," and for confining themselves to the mere imputation that I am laboring under a delusion. It is, therefore, to that point I shall confine myself in what I have now to say.

It was in January, 1851, that my attention was first called to the subject of "spiritual intercourse." I was at the time withdrawn from general society; I was laboring under great depression of spirits. I was occupying all my leisure in reading on the subject of death, and man's existence afterward. I had in the course of my life read and heard from the pulpit so many contradictory and conflicting doctrines on the subject, that I hardly knew what to believe. I could not, if I would, believe what I did not understand, and was anxiously seeking to know if, after death, we should again meet with those whom we had loved here, and under what circumstances. I was invited by a friend to witness the "Rochester Knockings." I complied, more to oblige her and to while away a tedious hour. I thought a good deal on what I witnessed, and determined to investigate the matter and find out what it was. If it was a deception or a delusion, I thought that I could detect it. For about four months I devoted at least two evenings in a week, and sometimes more, to witnessing the phenomenon in all its phases. I kept careful records of all I witnessed, and from time to time compared them with each other, to detect inconsistencies and contradictions. I read all I could lay my hands on, on the subject, and especially all the professed "exposures of the humbug." I went from place to place, seeing different mediums, meeting with different parties of persons, often with persons whom I had never seen before, and sometimes where I was myself entirely unknown—sometimes in the dark and sometimes in the light—often with inveterate unbelievers, and more frequently with zealous believers. In fine, I availed myself of every opportunity that was afforded, thoroughly to sift the matter to the bottom. I was all this time an unbeliever, and tried the patience of believers sorely by my skepticism, my captiousness, and my obdurate refusal to yield my belief. I saw around me some who yielded a ready faith on one or two sittings only; others again, under the same circumstances, avowing a determined unbelief; and some who refused to witness it at all, and yet were confirmed unbelievers. I could not imitate either of these parties, and refused to yield unless upon most irrefragable testi-

mony. At length the evidence came, and in such force that no sane man could withhold his faith.

Thus far the question I was investigating was, whether what I saw was produced by mere mortal means, or by some invisible, unknown agency; in other words, whether it was a deception, an imposition, or what it professed to be, the product of some unknown, unseen cause. To detail what I witnessed would far exceed the limits of this communication, for my records of it for those four months alone fill at least one hundred and thirty closely-written pages. I will, however, mention a few things, which will give a general idea of that which characterized interviews, now numbering several hundred. Most of them have occurred in the presence of others besides myself. I have preserved their names in my records, but do not give them to the world, because I do not desire to subject them to the obloquy which seems, most strangely, to be visited upon all who look into the matter with any other feeling than a resolute and obstinate incredulity, whatever the evidence. But these considerations grow out of this fact: 1st, that I have thus very many witnesses, whom I can invoke to establish the truth of my statements; and, 2d, that if I have been deluded, and have not seen and heard what I think I have, my delusion has been shared by many as shrewd, as intelligent, as honest, and as enlightened people as are to be found anywhere among us.

My attention was first drawn to the intercourse by the rappings, then the most common, but now the most inconsiderable, mode of communing. Of course I was on the look out for deception, and at first relied upon my senses and the conclusions which my reason might draw from their evidence. But I was at a loss to tell how the mediums could cause what I witnessed under these circumstances: the mediums walking the length of a suite of parlors, forty or fifty feet, and the rappings being distinctly heard five or six feet behind them, the whole distance, backward and forward several times; being heard near the top of a mahogany door, above where the medium could reach, and as if struck hard with a fist; being heard on the bottom of a car when traveling, on a railroad, and on the floor and the table, when seated at lunch, at an eating-house by the side of the road; being heard at different parts of the room, sometimes several feet distance from the medium, and where she could not reach—sometimes on the table and immediately after on

the floor, and then at different parts of the table, in rapid succession, enabling us to feel the vibration as well as hear the sounds; sometimes when the hands and feet of the medium were both firmly and carefully held by some one of the party, and sometimes on a table when no one touched it.

After depending upon my senses, as to these various phases of the phenomenon, I invoked the aid of science, and with the assistance of an accomplished electrician and his machinery, and of eight or ten intelligent, educated, shrewd persons, examined the matter. We pursued our inquiries many days, and established to our satisfaction two things: first, that the sounds were not produced by the agency of any person present or near us; and, second, that they were not forthcoming at our will and pleasure.

In the mean time another feature attracted my attention, and that was "physical manifestations," as they are termed. Thus, I have known a pine table with four legs lifted bodily up from the floor, in the center of a circle of six or eight persons, turned upside down and laid upon its top at our feet, then lifted up over our heads, and put leaning against the back of the sofa on which we sat. I have known that same table to be tilted up on two legs, its top at an angle with the floor of forty-five degrees, when it neither fell over of itself, nor could any person present put it back on its four legs. I have seen a mahogany table, having only a center leg, and with a lamp burning upon it, lifted from the floor at least a foot, in spite of the efforts of those present, and shaken backward and forward as one would shake a goblet in his hand, and the lamp retain its place, though its glass pendants rang again. I have seen the same table tipped up with the lamp upon it, so far that the lamp must have fallen off unless retained there by something else than its own gravity, yet it fell not, moved not. I have known a dinner-bell taken from a high shelf in a closet, rung over the heads of four or five persons in that closet, then rung around the room over the heads of twelve or fifteen persons in the back parlor, and then borne through the folding doors to the farther end of the front parlor, and there dropped on the floor. I have frequently known persons pulled about with a force which it was impossible for them to resist, and once, when all my strength was added in vain to that of the one thus affected. I have known a mahogany chair thrown on its side and moved swiftly back and forth on the floor, no one touching it,

through a room where there were at least a dozen people sitting, yet no one was touched, and it was repeatedly stopped within a few inches of me, when it was coming with a violence which, if not arrested, must have broken my legs.

This is not a tithe—nay! not a hundredth part of what I have witnessed of the same character, but it is enough to show the general nature of what was before me.

At the same time I have heard from others, whose testimony would be credited in any human transaction, and which I could not permit myself to disregard, accounts of still more extraordinary transactions, for I have been by no means as much favored in this respect as some.

While these things were going on, there appeared in the newspapers various explanations and “exposures of the humbug,” as they were termed. I read them with care, in the expectation of being assisted in my researches, and I could not but smile at once at the rashness and the futility of the explanations. For instance, while certain learned professors in Buffalo were congratulating themselves on having detected it in the toe and knee joints, the manifestations in this city changed to ringing a bell placed under the table. They were like the solution lately given by a learned professor in England, who attributes the tipping of tables to a force in the hands which are laid upon it, overlooking the material fact that tables quite frequently move when there is no hand upon them.

What I have thus mentioned has happened in the presence of others as well as myself. I have not alluded to any of the things which have occurred to me when I have been alone, for as that would depend upon my testimony only, I have preferred not to subject my veracity to the rash and reckless contradictions of those who venture to denounce as an “atrocious imposture” that of which they are profoundly ignorant, and which has been examined and is believed in by thousands and tens of thousands of their fellow-citizens, who are, to say the least, every whit as honest and as intelligent as they are. Nor am I very anxious to submit my faith to the judgment of those who would have persecuted Galileo nigh unto death for discovering our planetary system, and have united in the cry of “folly” at Fulton’s steamboat, “humbug” at Morse’s telegraph, and “insanity” at Gray’s iron road.

Having thus, by a long series of patient inquiries, satisfied my-

self on this point, my next inquiry was, Whence comes the intelligence there is behind it all? For that intelligence was a remarkable feature of the phenomenon.

Thus I have frequently known mental questions answered, that is, questions merely framed in the mind of the interrogator, and not revealed by him or known to others. Preparatory to meeting a circle, I have sat down alone in my room and carefully prepared a series of questions to be propounded, and I have been surprised to find my questions answered, and in the precise order in which I wrote them, without my even taking my memorandum out of my pocket, and when I knew that not a person present even knew that I had prepared questions, much less what they were. My most secret thoughts, those which I have never uttered to mortal man or woman, have been freely spoken to as if I had uttered them. Purposes which I have privily entertained have been publicly revealed; and I have once and again been admonished that my every thought was known to, and could be disclosed by, the intelligence which was thus manifesting itself.

I have heard the mediums use Greek, Latin, Spanish, and French words, when I knew they had no knowledge of any language but their own; and it is a fact that can be attested by many, that often there has been speaking and writing in foreign languages and unknown tongues by those who were unacquainted with either.

Still the question occurred, May not all this have been, by some mysterious operation, the mere reflex of the mind of some one present? The answer was, that facts were communicated which were unknown then, but afterward found to be true; like this, for instance: when I was absent last winter in Central America, my friends in town heard of my whereabouts and of the state of my health seven times, and on my return, by comparing their information with the entries in my journal, it was found to be invariably correct. So in my recent visit to the West, my whereabouts and my condition were told to a medium in this city while I was traveling on the railroad between Cleveland and Toledo. So thoughts have been uttered on subjects not then in my mind, and utterly at variance with my own notions. This has often happened to me and to others, so as fully to establish the fact that it was not our minds that gave birth to or affected the communication.

Kindred to this are two well-authenticated cases of persons who

can read the thoughts of others in their minds. One is an artist of this city of high reputation, and the other the editor of a newspaper in a neighboring city. The latter wrote me, that in company with three friends he had tried the experiment, and for over forty successive attempts found he could read the secret thoughts of his companions as soon as they were formed, and without their being uttered. So, too, there is the instance of two persons, one of them also resident in this city, who can give a faithful delineation of the character, and even the prevailing mood of mind, of any person, however unknown to them, upon whom they fix their attention.

These are not apocryphal cases. The parties are at hand, and in our very midst, and any person that pleases may make the investigation, as I have, and satisfy himself.

But all this, and much, very much more of a kindred nature, went to show me that there was a high order of intelligence involved in this new phenomenon—an intelligence outside of, and beyond, mere mortal agency; for there was no other hypothesis which I could devise or hear of that could at all explain that, whose reality is established by the testimony of tens of thousands, and can easily be ascertained by any one who will take the trouble to inquire.

If these two points were established—and there are now in these United States hundreds of thousands of sentient beings who have investigated and believe they are—then came this important question, *Cui bono?* To what end is it all? For what purpose? With what object?

To that inquiry I have directed my earnest attention, devoting to the task for over two years all the leisure I could command, and increasing that leisure as far as I could by withdrawing myself from all my former recreations. I have gone from circle to circle, from medium to medium, seeking knowledge on the subject wherever I could obtain it, either from books or from observation, and bringing to bear upon it whatever of intelligence I have been gifted with by nature, sharpened and improved by over thirty years' practice at the bar, in the legislature, and on the bench.

I found there were very many ways in which this unseen intelligence communed with us, besides the rappings and table tipplings, and that through those other modes there came very many communications distinguished for their eloquence, their high order of

intellect, and their pure and lofty moral tone; at the same time I discovered many inconsistencies and contradictions that were calculated to mislead. I saw many puerile and some very absurd statements, and many that were admirably calculated to make man better and happier, and I set to work to see if I could not out of this chaos gather something that might be valuable.

I was satisfied that something more was intended than the gratification of an idle curiosity; something more than pandering to a diseased appetite for the marvelous; something more than the promulgation of oracular platitudes; something more than upsetting material objects to the admiration of the wonder-lover; something more than telling the age of the living or the dead, etc.

For that something I have industriously searched. I thought that was wiser than to condemn without investigation, and denounce without knowledge. What I have discovered in that regard I have intended to give to the world, that all may judge for themselves whether there is any thing in it worthy the attention of intelligent beings. It would have been done ere this if my leisure would have allowed me time to prepare my manuscript for the press. Now I expect that my book will be published by the first of September, and to that I refer, as I have already said, for particulars.

In the mean time, it is due to myself and to others to say, that our faith, as growing out of these researches, is not "at irreconcilable variance with revelation." How little do they, who make such charges, know of this matter! Misled by the crudities which alone are seen in the newspapers of the day, because the graver matters can not find admission there, the idea is, I am aware, entertained by some that this new philosophy is at variance with the revelation through Christ, the Redeemer. This is indeed a sad mistake, and one that believers would be too happy to correct, if only the opportunity could be afforded them.

So, too, is it a grievous error to suppose that it "constitutes an abandonment of all self-control, and a surrender of the supremacy of reason, as informed and enlightened by the senses." There was never yet, I venture to say, a religious creed promulgated among men, which so entirely eschewed blind faith, and so fully and always demanded the exercise of the judgment and the supremacy of the reason.

Hence it is that we are taught that none of these extraordinary

things which are witnessed by so many, are miraculous, or flow from any suspension of nature's laws, but are, on the other hand, in conformity with, and in execution of, those laws; that like the steam-engine and the magnetic telegraph, they are marvelous only to those who do not understand them or are not familiar with them; that those laws, and the means by which they produce such results, are as capable of being found out by human research; that the knowledge is not confined to a few, but is open to all, rich or poor, high or low, wise or ignorant, who will wisely and patiently search for it, and that when it is attained it can not but work in the heart "a closer walk with God," and an intercourse with our fellow-men of a more elevated character, void of selfishness, and devoted to their absolute advancement in all knowledge and goodness, both in this world and in the world to come.

This is a part of the something which I have found in my researches. But there is more yet. There is that which comforts the mourner and binds up the broken-hearted; that which smooths the passage to the grave and robs death of its terrors; that which enlightens the Atheist, and can not but reform the vicious; that which cheers and encourages the virtuous amid all the trials and vicissitudes of life, and that which demonstrates to man his duty and his destiny, leaving it no longer vague and uncertain. What that is, I can not in the limits of this letter explain, but in due time it will be forthcoming, and each one can judge for himself.

But now may I not ask if I overrate the importance of the subject of my inquiries? Scarcely more than four years have elapsed since the "Rochester Knockings" were first known among us. Then mediums could be counted by units, but now by thousands—then believers could be numbered by hundreds, now by tens of thousands. It is believed by the best informed, that the whole number in the United States must be several hundred thousands, and that in this city and its vicinity there must be from twenty-five to thirty thousand. There are ten or twelve newspapers and periodicals devoted to the cause, and the Spiritual Library embraces more than one hundred different publications, some of which have already attained a circulation of more than ten thousand copies. Besides the undistinguished multitude, there are many men of high standing and talent ranked among them, doctors, lawyers, and clergymen in great numbers, a Protestant bishop, the learned and rev-

erend president of a college, judges of our higher courts, members of Congress, foreign ambassadors, and ex-members of the National Senate.

That which has thus spread with such marvelous celerity in spite of the ridicule which has deterred so many from an open avowal, and which has attracted the attention of so many of the best minds among us, can not be unworthy of my investigation, or that of persons far wiser and more reliable than I am.

It is now more than a year that my peculiar faith has been the subject of public comment. During it all I have been silent as to those attacks, content steadily to pursue my investigations until I could arrive at satisfactory results. Perhaps I have been silent too long, for, in the mean time, very erroneous notions as to that faith have been allowed to spring up. But I was unwilling to speak until I was as sure as I could be, that I was right, lest I might utter some crudity which, by-and-by, I might regret—commit some error which I might find it difficult to correct, or, in fine, unhappily mislead in my ignorance, rather than wisely guide by my knowledge.

I went into the investigation originally thinking it a deception, and intending to make public my exposure of it. Having, from my researches, come to a different conclusion, I feel that the obligation to make known the result is just as strong. Therefore it is, mainly, that I give the result to the world. I say mainly, because there is another consideration which influences me, and that is the desire to extend to others a knowledge which I am conscious can not but make them happier and better.

If those who doubt this could but spend a few days with me in my library, and witness the calls I have from strangers from all parts of the country; if they could but look over my portfolio, and read the letters which pour in upon me from all sections, and from persons whom I have never seen and never may see, they would be able, from the evidence thus furnished of the good that has been done, to form some idea of what may yet be accomplished, and they would not wonder that I find a compensation for the obloquy that is so freely heaped upon me by the ignorant, in the grateful outpourings of hearts which have, by my means, been relieved. One of them says (and it is a fair specimen of the whole), "You have acted the part of the good Samaritan, and poured oil into the wound of one like to die, and you will have rendered a death-bed,

sooner or later, calm and hopeful, which might have been disturbed by doubts."

This, then, is the offense for which I have been arraigned at the bar of the public with so unsparring a condemnation, declared unworthy of my high office, falsely accused of consulting aught else than the law of the land and my own reason in the judgments which I officially pronounce, and have had invoked against me "the fires of Smithfield and the hangings of Salem." From such a condemnation it is that I appeal to the calm, unbiassed judgment of my countrymen, with a firm reliance upon its justice.

J. W. EDMONDS.

NEW YORK, August 1, 1853.

DR. DEXTER'S INTRODUCTION.

It is scarcely worth the while, perhaps, that I should make public the causes and influences which have directed my investigation to the subject of "Spiritual Manifestations," or why that investigation has resulted in a sincere belief that spirits who have left the form hold daily and hourly intercourse with man.

But professing as I do to be the medium through which certain spirits have written what may be found in the following pages of this work, there seems to be a propriety in giving to the public, in connection with the spirit-teachings written through my hand, some of the evidences of the truth of spirit-intercourse, which have satisfied my mind, as well as how I am acted upon when under direction of the spirits, and the manner in which they influence me.

And it should be understood that I was not only conservative in regard to this question of spirit-communication when it was first presented to my consideration, but I was positively opposed, and regarded the whole matter as either a foolish delusion or an absolute, outrageous deception, and that this opposition continued long after such proof had been offered, both to my reason and physical consciousness, as would have removed all doubts in reference to the truth of any other subject under heaven.

I also wish to be understood as declining to argue the question, whether it be possible for spirits to leave their own homes and visit this earth. It is sufficient for my belief that I have had such proof, and have so carefully examined the evidence offered to me of the fact that they can do so, that I am without a doubt of its truth; and I present the brief history of my experience, only from

the connection existing between myself as the medium of communication, and the spirits who have written these teachings through my hand.

It is now nearly two years since "spirit-rappings" first attracted my notice, and I have already stated that my unbelief was so great that I was ready to denounce the whole subject as one of the grossest humbugs of the day. But I was actuated by two kinds of feeling when I consented to visit a circle, to which I was invited by a friend: one, a desire to satisfy my curiosity, and the other an impression that the whole phenomena, if not the result of trickery or collusion, could be explained as taking place under the operation of some natural law, and that I perhaps might detect the illusion, or explain the principle by which these effects were produced.

It will not be improper for me to say, that there was no feeling of egotism in this idea that I might discover the causes producing the wonderful developments about which I had heard so much; on the contrary, I imagine that my own ideas were precisely similar to those which are publicly announced by many persons every day, who, desirous to set this perplexing subject at rest, fill the columns of the newspapers with attempted explanations, when in truth they know nothing about the matter, with this difference only, that I was really determined to investigate first, and explain afterward, and they, on the other hand, are so earnest to convince, that the explanation comes first, and the examination whenever they have time or inclination to attend to it.

But be this as it may, my attention being called to this subject, I made arrangements with a friend to invite to my own house a medium of considerable powers, and thus to have an opportunity of careful investigation where I knew there could be no collusion, and the chances for deception would be very few. Previous to this time, about the 10th of September, 1851, I had never witnessed any spiritual manifestation, and neither had any of the members of my family been present at a circle; both they and myself were entirely ignorant of the whole subject. But on this evening the medium referred to and my friend, together with my family and myself, formed a circle at my house, where, for the first time, I heard the peculiar sounds called spirit-raps. I was not satisfied with the results of this sitting, though many mental questions were propounded and answered correctly. The impression on my mind

was unfavorable, and to satisfy myself and others of the medium's powers, as well as to see more of the spirit-capacity to communicate, I invited the medium to remain with me all night, and proposed another sitting the next morning. To this he readily assented, and on the following morning, while seated at the breakfast-table, talking on other subjects than spiritualism, loud raps were heard under the table, on the walls of the room, and in the hall; two or three loud resonant raps were made on the outside door, and were so distinct and natural, that I supposed some one had called in haste for my services. I rose instantly and went to the door, opened it hastily; but there was no one there, neither was there any person in sight. These occurrences stimulated my curiosity to see still more of what the spirits could do; and immediately after breakfast we formed a circle, at which were present myself and all the members of my family, the friend I have before mentioned, and another friend, who could not be present on the evening previous. The two gentlemen friends and myself were positive unbelievers, and the others, Mrs. D. and my two daughters, were in the same catalogue. One of my daughters was about fourteen years of age, and the other was not yet nine years old. It will not, I am sure, appear improper to interrupt my narrative in this connection to say, that my children had been accustomed to attend the Presbyterian Church from their earliest youth, that they had naturally imbibed many of the peculiar views of this sect in regard to the soul and its destiny after death, and that they had no idea of the *modus operandi* of spirit on the medium, either by hearsay or by sight. I make these remarks in reference to their religious education, that I may thus show an educational prejudice against any effect on them as mediums, and I reiterate that they knew nothing about the matter, that what I am about to relate may not be attributed to what is termed the magnetic influence of minds accustomed to sit in circles.

The circle was formed immediately after breakfast, and we were directed to sing, etc., and soon had abundant manifestations.

After we had remained sitting, with the raps heard in every direction, not only on the table, but on the chairs, walls of the room, and once or twice on the stove-funnel, it was written out by the medium, "Let Mr. G. go into the other room." Mr. G. did as he was directed, and went into the next room. Now, my

youngest daughter, during this whole sitting, had not manifested the interest I had expected, and appeared somewhat tired of the affair before this direction was given to the medium; but as soon as he left the room she became visibly agitated all over, her countenance changed, and she was evidently resisting, with considerable effort, what I first supposed was a slight attack of illness from being so long shut up in one room. I asked her if she were sick? She replied, "No, but I can't keep either my body or my hands still, I am trembling all over." As soon as she uttered this, her arms and hands were violently shaken, so much so, that I was afraid she would injure herself by the forcible manner in which they were thrown in every direction. This effect of the magnetic influence was so sudden, so strange, so entirely unexpected by the child, that she became very much alarmed, and running to her mother, who was also deeply moved at this unlooked-for manifestation, she said, while her voice trembled with fear, "Oh, mother! take me away, take me away;" but her arms were forcibly wrested, as it were, from her mother's neck, and thrown violently up and down, and yet while they were so rapidly and forcibly moving in all directions, every fiber of the textures quivered as if trembling with palsy. One can easily conceive of the deep impression this singular exhibition made on us all. And the more so, when, having soothed the frightened child, we induced her to remain in the circle some twenty minutes longer, her hand was made to write legibly and in bold, large letters, not in the least resembling her ordinary handwriting, full answers to all our questions, both mental and oral. And what was yet more remarkable, she wrote rapidly and easily, and the style of the composition and the spelling far excelled what we knew was the character of her original attempts at composition or her spelling, previous to this time. About one o'clock she was ordered to leave the circle by the spirits—as being fatigued—and not immediately complying with the direction, her chair was drawn from under her by some invisible agency, and she fell to the floor. She arose to go into the next room, and as she was passing a sofa she was taken up bodily, by the same unseen force, and deposited upon it, as gently as if laid there by her parents. At this sitting there were many correct answers given to questions, and of such a character as satisfied some individuals that the spirits of their friends were really there. But after the excitement con-

sequent on our daughter's being developed as a medium was over, I could not bring myself to believe that spirits had any thing to do with the matter. I tried to explain it by the action of mind over mind, or the power of magnetic motion, and many other reasons, but I was not satisfied. I was as much in the fog of my own solutions of the phenomena, as I was at the singularity of the disclosures. I did not doubt that every thing I witnessed took place without the intervention of any individual present, and I knew that those present could not have tricked me, and in my own child I had that confidence which a life of truthfulness had inspired. Yet the idea that the spirits of our deceased friends could hold communication with ourselves on earth, could impart their feelings to us, give us a description of the various stages and conditions of their progress in the spheres above us, that they are constantly with those to whom they are attached, except when called away by the duties they are required to perform, that they have the power, through this new discovery, to explain to us every act of their spirit-life, and receive from us the ordinary ideas which characterize our existence and connection here, was so strange, wonderful, and extraordinary, so incompatible with my education, so much opposed to all my preconceived opinions, conflicted so much with my religious belief, and with all that I had been instructed the Bible revealed to us, when compared with all I had seen at this circle, bewildered me. But I could not understand—I did not believe. I do not intend to give in detail all that I have seen and heard during my investigation; it will be sufficient for my purpose to give the leading features of the evidence received, or all that I consider of importance for my present object. Some time in October of the same year I was sitting in a circle at which was present a gentleman who had lost his wife some two years before, and whose spirit indicated her presence and her wish to communicate with him. He had witnessed many revelations of the spirits, and was partially convinced that what he saw was true. In order to test the identity of the spirit, as he was aware no one then sitting with him had been acquainted with his wife when on earth, or knew any thing respecting the subject about which he was to interrogate her, he said, "If this is the spirit of my wife, she can certainly tell me what were the last words I spoke to her when dying, and the reply which she made to me; no one present knows what that was." The medium

was occupied in answering other questions for some little time, and then wrote out the precise words uttered by him on that occasion, and the exact reply which his wife made.

Even this, convincing as it was to all present, did not satisfy me. I attributed it to a sort of psychological effect on the mind of the medium, though she was talking and laughing during the time she was writing this test of the spirit's identity. About this time I was engaged in some business which required my absence for the day from home. The spirit of a beloved friend had intimated to my wife that he would apprise her of the time when I should conclude this affair; and on the day mentioned, just at the hour when I had consummated the matter, he wrote out, through my daughter's hand, "The doctor has settled his business." She asked him how he knew? and he replied, "I have just left him; it was six o'clock when he finished." As soon as I returned home, Mrs. D. immediately accosted me, and said, "So you have arranged your affair." I was surprised, and asked her how she knew? She mentioned her authority, and I then recalled to mind, that just as the final arrangements were made, the clock in the room struck six. The spirit had been with me until that moment, and then left to convey the intelligence to my wife. I did not attempt to explain this circumstance even to myself, but I was yet an unbeliever.

It will not, I am sure, be required of me to say, that when present at promiscuous circles, or those at my own house, I subjected every thing I saw or heard to the most rigid scrutiny. There are many persons whom I was in the daily habit of meeting at circles, who can bear testimony to the manner in which my investigations were conducted. I was sincere in my efforts to get at the truth. I was an unbeliever, and I have often interrupted the circle, and sometimes have completely prevented all manifestation, by my captiousness and quibbling. There was no kind of evidence but what was presented. The secret thoughts of my heart were read as if they had been written on my face. Secrets known only to the dead and myself were revealed to me when there was no one present but the medium and myself, and that medium a stranger to all parties. Events occurring at the distance of thousands of miles were told to me even while they were taking place, and afterward were corroborated to the letter by the individuals who were active agents in the transaction. Facts relating to my own

action were predicted months before they took place, and even now while I am writing, I recall to mind a prediction made by the spirit of a near and dear friend two years ago, "that I should give to the world in a book my confidence, my belief in the truth of spirit-intercourse with man." I have seen the medium represent the walk, the voice, and the peculiarities of a deceased person of whom she never heard, even while the spirit of that individual was manifesting his identity by her.

I have witnessed the medium so completely under control of the spirit, that speech, motion, and even thought itself, was at the command of the spirit influencing her. I have listened to the most elevated thoughts couched in language far beyond her comprehension, describing facts in science, and circumstances in the daily life of the spirit after death, which were corroborated fact by fact, idea by idea, by other mediums with whom she was entirely unacquainted, uttered by a little girl scarce nine years old. The same medium I have heard repeat verse after verse, *impromptu*, of poetry, glowing with inspiration and sparkling with profound thought and sentiment, and yet this child never wrote a line of poetry before in her life. I have taken notes of certain circumstances revealed to me through one medium, and then at another circle, and through another medium who knew nothing of my intention, and who was unacquainted with the first medium, have had the same statements made, in every particular corresponding with those I first received.

I have heard an illiterate mechanic repeat Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Chaldaic, and describe the customs and habits of men living on the earth thousands of years ago, which have been found correct by the researches and discoveries given to the world by those who are and have been engaged in the exploration of ancient nations, either by their architectural remains or through their hieroglyphics.

I have been present when a medium answered many questions in the Italian language, of which she was ignorant, and also uttered several sentences in the same language, and then gave the name of an Italian gentleman of whom she had never heard, but who was when living the friend of one of the party at the circle.

It would be impossible for me, in the limits of this paper, to give the whole nature of the evidence vouchsafed to me; it has been offered in all situations and at all times; it has appealed to my affections, in the manifestation of that same love which guard

ed my life from early youth to manhood, and it has presented to my memory facts long since buried with the past, as vividly as if they had taken place yesterday.

Neither was the evidence general, but in all those minute peculiarities of individual characteristics, of time, place, and circumstance it was as identical as if I were again in positive association with those long since dead, and again participating in those transactions which marked their connection with me while on earth. Frequently when I have asked for evidence of identity from a spirit professing to be a near relative, the medium has repeated the same phrases and expressions, and has uttered the same words of endearment and affection that the relative was in the habit of using in his intercourse with me on earth, when by no possibility could this medium have known that I ever had such relation, or that he ever lived in this world.

But it is unnecessary to offer any more examples of this kind of evidence.

After my curiosity had been satisfied by the daily manifestations I witnessed, and after I was convinced that there was no trickery or collusion in the totality of the phenomena, both mental and physical, and when it was evident that I was unable to explain, either by the effect of natural, or moral laws, how these things were done, it will scarcely be credited that with the abundant, overwhelming evidence I had received, I was still an unbeliever. But so it was; and although I could not solve this wonderful problem after months of careful examination, and although I was at times ready to say, "I am almost persuaded to be a Spiritualist," I still did not believe. For I would not admit that it was possible for spirit, intangible, unsubstantial, and ethereal, as I had always understood it to be, could be permitted to commune with man; and especially did I disbelieve that a spirit, which was a sort of sublimated nothing, and had really no tangible identity, as I had been taught, was able to move tables, rap on walls, lift heavy men, and manifest itself through matter to this world which it had left forever. No. When I candidly compared fact with fact, evidence with evidence, my mind acknowledged that if a moiety of the proof had been offered me on any other controverted question, I must have believed. I *knew* it could not be, and therefore I did not believe.

It was not until after I had become fully developed as a writing

medium, against my will and determined efforts to the contrary, that I yielded an implicit faith in the truth of spirit-intercourse with man. Those of my readers who follow me through this part of my experience, will be satisfied that if I was justified in rejecting such testimony as I have already described, I were more than man to refuse still to believe, when I was a living, acting evidence that through me, and against my will, spirits possessed the power and ability to write their thoughts and express sentiments and ideas as much opposed to the ordinary action of my mind as if I were another person. And when it is understood that I am entirely ignorant of what I write until it is read to me, and that the handwriting differs from my usual style, and that I frequently can not read what has been written, it will not appear so remarkable, that in connection with all the other proof offered me I am now, as I have been for some time, a believer in spirit-rappings, table-movings, and all the phenomena of spirit-communication.

Let it also be understood that the spirit-manifestation by my arm is absolutely involuntary. I have no direction in the act. My muscles are the medium of spirit-communication, not my thought; and neither does my mind recognize the thoughts expressed until after they have been read to me when the communication is concluded.

Neither my will nor my desire had any thing to do with my development, for they were both opposed; and the first time I was conscious that I was impressed with the same influence I had seen manifested through other mediums, I exerted all the power of mind and body I possessed to rid myself of it.

I was sitting alone in my office, late at night, and was leaning back in a rocking-chair, my right hand resting on the arm of the chair. I was not, neither had I been thinking of spiritualism, for my thoughts were occupied in the subject I had been reading upon a few moments before. As my hand lay on the arm of the chair I felt a singular sensation in the whole limb, as if the arm were grasped by two hands at its upper part. I attempted to raise it, but was unable so to do, and as soon as I made the effort to move it, the fingers were bent down tightly on the arm of the chair and grasped it firmly. Immediately the hand began to tremble, and as I watched the movement the whole limb was shaken violently. At this moment I distinctly heard two loud raps on the upper part

of the side wall of the room, and it then occurred to me that this unseen power, whose manifestation I had so often witnessed, was in some way operating on me. To satisfy myself, I asked in an audible voice, "Did the spirits just rap?" there were three distinct raps in reply. I then asked, "Are the spirits trying to influence me?" again there were three distinct raps. At this I arose from my chair, arranged my books, and then retired. The sensation in my arm left me while occupied at my table, and did not return. After I was in bed, however, there were raps on the head-board, and my arm slightly trembled, but I resisted the influence with all my will, and it passed off. I should like to understand to the effect of what natural law this singular manifestation can be ascribed? As far as I was concerned, I certainly had nothing to do with its production. I was not engaged even in thinking about spirits, and much less expecting any such influence on my own person. Why were the raps heard at the same time? and why did they take place in my bed-chamber also? The special effect produced on my own organization, I confess, troubled me not a little. If there had been before this period a lingering doubt in my mind that the phenomena of so-called spirit-action on the physical system of the mediums might have arisen from some power emanating from the minds or bodies of the circle, I could not deny that my mind had no influence in generating the sensation I had experienced in my own person, and as there was no one present with me in my office, I could not attribute the manifestation to the mental force of another person. Conscious the whole subject of spirit-obsession, as far as I individually was concerned, was obnoxious, and that I had resisted the sensation in my arm with the whole force and power of my will, I could give no other solution to this singular affair than to ascribe it to some invisible, intelligent source which designed to place me under its control, and which positively succeeded in so doing.

From this time I was frequently impressed by this same kind of influence, which, however, the exercise of my will enabled me to throw off without such a decided possession as I at first observed. When I visited a circle my hand and arm would be agitated as long as I remained sitting, and often after I have left the circle the same trembling sensation would be felt for hours. Not only was the arm the seat of spirit-possession, but my whole body has

been subjected to their impression; and I recall to mind a remarkable attempt, continued for two whole days, to bring me under this influence, which so affected my whole system, and especially my right arm, that I found it impossible to resist them. It followed me wherever I went, and in whatever business I was engaged, whether waking or sleeping it was the same, and during these two days my mind and will were taxed to their utmost to counteract its effect, but without success, and not until almost prostrated by fatigue did the trembling of the arm cease.

In view of this apparent design of the spirits to develop my organization, as the medium by which they might communicate with this world, the question arises, If it requires an entire passiveness of the mind for the electrical connection to be established by one will over another, and that the electrical or psychological affinities of a number of individuals, seated in a circle, are also necessary to generate this peculiar agent, how was it that my arm was brought under the control of this influence, when, as often stated, I was an unbeliever, and my mind opposed to every form of the manifestations? Certainly *I* was not passive. It would seem probable, at least, that my own mind being in a condition antagonistical to this power, if electrical or psychological, my mind and body would have been impregnable, and no effect could have been produced on either system. I leave this problem to be solved by those who attribute so-called spirit-manifestation to material agencies, and pass on to other portions of my subject.

After this concerted and continued attempt to impress me had passed over, I refrained from visiting circles, and thought by staying away I might be free from any impression; on the contrary, my arm would be moved when asleep, and awake me by its motion. During the time I abstained from sitting in any circle, I was twice lifted bodily from my bed, moved off its edge, and thus suspended in the air. The first time I was so dealt with, I had retired to a different room from the one I usually occupied. I had not been asleep, and was conscious of every thing around me. As I lay composing myself for sleep, I discovered my whole body was slightly trembling in every fiber. I attempted to raise my hand, but I could not move; my eyes were closed, and the lids fastened. My mind was unusually active, and I noted every thing that took place with an intenseness of perception I never before

experienced. My bodily sensation was likewise increased in power. As I lay there unable to move a limb, my body was lifted from the bed, and moved gently toward the edge, with the bedclothes over it; there it remained a moment, and then it was moved off the bed into the room, suspended in the air, and there held for an instant. Just at this time the fire-bells rang an alarm, and my body was suddenly brought back to the bed and deposited in the same place I had previously occupied, with a sort of jerk, as if it had been dropped from the hands which held it. I immediately recovered my powers of locomotion, and arose from the bed and examined the clothes, and found they had been drawn over toward the side whence I had been lifted, and were trailing on the floor.

I was deeply moved at this special evidence of spirit-manifestation. The repeated and determined attempts to bring me under their control had been disregarded when the impression left me. Heretofore my arm had been the organ to which their efforts had been chiefly directed; now my whole body was subjected to their influence, against my will and desire, and all my struggles and efforts to resist them. For the first time it occurred to me that, perhaps in this evident design to develop me as a medium, I might, by submitting to their direction, arrive at the whole truth of spirit-intercourse with man. I felt impelled to ask if there were spirits in the room. Three distinct raps were given in reply, indicating they were present; and then too deeply agitated to question further, I again returned to bed to ponder over this, to me, uncontrovertible evidence that spirits could indeed influence man, the truth of which I was then willing to admit.

The other occasion when I was subjected to a similar manifestation I was in the country, and the spirits moved my body in the same manner after I had retired to bed. At this, as well as the first time, I was so singularly influenced, the whole process was unexpected, and it seemed to be the intention of this invisible agency to impress me when I was least prepared to expect it. This ability of the spirits to impress me without any previous preparation on my part unfolded to my mind the intimate connection existing between beings of this and the spirit-world, and their power of manifesting that relation under all condition and circumstances. But as if to give me still further evidence of that ability, they showed me that by my instrumentality they could manifest that

Intelligence which characterized them as sentient, reasoning beings. Thus, after the experience I had had of their physical power, I sought opportunity where I might witness more of their doings. When in pursuance of this design I attended circles, my hand was seized and made to write. At first the sentences were short, and contained a single idea, but as I became developed they wrote out many pages, embracing various ideas and subjects. Still there was no manifest purpose in what was written through my hand that they intended to write a connected work on any subject.

Occupied with my profession, I could spare but little time, comparatively, to general or special circles. Every meeting, however, at which I was present, something new was always developed, and the handwriting of the spirits manifesting assumed peculiar and distinct character, thus identifying the individual who wrote through my hand. The earlier attempts we were hardly able to decipher, but after some practice the writing was rapid, bold, and easily read. From the first essay of the spirits to influence my hand to write, it was the medium by which many, both friends and strangers, communicated with the circle; but when the design was apparent that they had developed me for a special object, my hand was controlled by two spirits, whose names will be found recorded in this book as Sweedenborg and Bacon.

During the whole time, from their earliest endeavor to write, they have used my hand as the instrument to convey their own thoughts, without any appreciation on my part of either ideas or subject.

I know nothing of what is written until after it is read to me, and frequently, when asked to read what has been communicated, I have found it utterly impossible to decipher it. Not only is the thought concealed, but after it has been read to me I lose all recollection of the subject, until again my memory is refreshed by the reading. This peculiar effect on my recollection occurred more frequently when the spirits commenced writing; and I have been told by them that it was produced by their efforts to separate the action of my own mind from their thoughts, when teaching on a subject which required several sittings to finish.

It was necessary at the earlier period of my development that I should sit in a circle before my hand could be moved, and sometimes I would sit an hour or more before any perceptible influence

would be discovered. As my susceptibility increased, the impression was felt almost as soon as the circle was formed. Now I am instantly under control the moment the business of the evening has commenced, either with or without the aid of other individuals. Often, when I am alone in my office, my hand will be moved, and I am obliged to abandon every other purpose till the spirits have concluded their communication. An incident of this kind happened some months since, after I had retired to bed. I was awakened out of my sleep by the rapid and violent motion of my hand. It was midnight, and I could assign no cause for this unusual manifestation, and essayed to throw off the influence by all possible means, but in vain. I was compelled to rise and procure pencil and paper, and a long communication was written before they would permit me again to sleep.

Another instance of their presence, when I was alone, took place a few weeks ago in my office. I had just returned from visiting my patients, and had seated myself in a rocking-chair, not intending to remain but a few minutes. I was scarcely seated, when my right hand began to move. In this hand was a small gold pencil, which I had just been using. I was somewhat impatient at this display of their presence, for I did not know how long I might be detained, and I could spare them but a very little time. I therefore pettishly exclaimed, "Don't detain me to write now, but show me something new." As if to gratify my request, the fingers and thumb were brought together at the ends, leaving the pencil resting on the ball of the thumb, and the fingers closed, forming a roof over it. In this shape the hand was pressed firmly on the arm of the chair, so I could not move it. The pencil was then turned round several times, drawn out from the hand, and lifted up toward the palm, without even a movement of the fingers or hand during the whole operation. At this moment a lady, resident in my house, who was an unbeliever, happened to come into the office. I asked her to watch the pencil in my hand and see if it stirred. I also charged her to watch my hand, and to observe if it moved in the least. I then asked the spirits to move the pencil as before, and the same process again took place in every particular, corresponding with the first. Whether this satisfied her or not of the presence and action of spirits, I am unable to say. I have her corroboration, however, of the fact as it occurred, that it was im-

possible for the pencil to have been so agitated by any effort of my own. It should be noticed in this connection, that when I am alone, as also when in a circle, the manifestation, whether by writing or any physical display, is entirely free of any participation with my own mind, either in the subject taught or in the effect produced on my body.

I reiterate this statement, that it may be understood that the teachings revealed by my instrumentality in this book contain thoughts, sentiments, and statements differing *in toto* from what were my own views when they were communicated. It will be observed, also, that the style and expression of Swedenborg is unlike that of Bacon, and while the latter at once plunges *in medias res*, the former almost invariably commences his teaching with some thought individual in its application to the circle. I have said the thoughts, etc., of these spirits disagree with my own. I mean, the history which they have given of "life in the spheres" was opposed to my idea of spirit-life when it had left the body. It is unnecessary for me to say, however, that a belief in the ability of "spirits departed" to commune with the living, comprehends likewise a belief in the glorious revelations which they have granted us. But they ask no blind faith in their identity or in their doctrines; they have inculcated love to God and love to our race as the governing principle of life on earth and life in the spheres, and yet they have left it to our unbiased judgment to decide whether they have taught truth or falsehood.

I have now given a brief history of some of the causes which have induced in me a belief in spirit-intercourse. In the language of the gentleman whose name is associated with mine on the title-page of this work, "it is not a tithe, not a hundredth part of what I have witnessed of a similar character." No; I have confined my statement to my own experience individually. I have omitted the many and varied manifestations in which I had no part, but which were far more wonderful than any thing I have related. There might have been cause for doubt in those manifestations which I witnessed through others, but those which were given through my own organism compelled me to an admission of their truth. In all and every of the phenomena of life there are certain laws that are acknowledged as the governing principles which control their manifestation. It is the prerogative of the thinking mind to trace the

cause from the effect; that is, to employ its senses, and to judge by analogy whether these laws are capable of producing those effects said to be consequent on their operation. Our perception of sensible objects depends on our senses, and on them we must rely. Thus when a limb is fractured by a cannon-shot, the mind recognizes the truth of this reasoning. If the hand is plunged into the fire, the force of the analogy is sustained, for a certain effect follows. But are not the same effects produced, whether the arm is voluntarily thrust into the fire, or is forced into the flame against the will or consent of its possessor? Is he not just as capable of judging of the effect produced in the one case as the other? In full possession of my senses, so did I discriminate in the effects produced on my organism by the spirits who used my arm as the medium of their communications. I saw that I was independent in every act of life. I could eat when I was hungry, and drink when thirsty; I could go and come at pleasure, and in every thing which concerned the action of mind or body, my will still maintained its independence.

Reasoning from the facts so abundant in every possible phase, it was evident that in one condition I was able to reject that which was unpleasant and accept that which was pleasant, but in another I was forced to yield my will to a power I felt entirely disregarded it.

In one condition I could not be forced to eat or drink, walk or ride, merely because another mind willed I should do so. My own volition had something to do in this matter. My tastes and inclinations, thoughts and sentiments, were in no wise changed. I was identically the same. I could will and act with the same vigor that had always characterized my mind or body. The violation of a physical law was followed by no new result, and my mind acknowledged its obedience to those same omnipotent principles which it had regarded as sacred since it was capable of realizing what was the nature of its obligations. There was no new law devised for my mental or physical government, for in all my relations with the world I still recognized no new development. I was the same; a reasoning being, just as capable of using the faculties I possessed in deciding whether the manifestations through my arm were generated from a psychological or electrical source, or whether they were the effect of my own imagination, as I was ca-

pable of deciding any other question depending on the voluntary or involuntary action of my mind or body. I, who in every situation of body was free, uncontrolled, was subjugated by this unseen, invisible force against the determined resistance of my own will, and the positive struggles of my own muscles. There could be but one decision to which my mind could arrive when its prejudices and educational biases were forced to succumb to the power of reason. And when at last the truth opened to my view, I beheld in this intercourse of the "spirit out of the form" with "the spirit in the form" the positive demonstration of the immortality of the soul. In the thoughts which they uttered, the glory and might, the wisdom, power, and love of our Creator were made manifest. And what have they taught us? They have taught that as the creeping thing, impelled by the very impulses of its being, prepares itself for perfection, and bursts from its silken tomb with new developed form, appetite, and nature, so the spirit, the germ of that form on which God has stamped the impress of his own image, springs into a new existence when it gives its body back to earth. They teach us that man aspires to immortality because it is the birthright of his soul; and because in the adaptation of spirit with matter in this world God has instituted certain laws for their regulation and government, and it is the very observance of these laws which will enable the spirit to develop those glorious attributes which its Creator has bestowed; that as spirit and matter were created and mingled together in this the first stage of existence, it furnishes indubitable proof that there is some end worthy the immortal aspirations of the spirit in its advancing struggles after knowledge and goodness. That as the Spirit of God pervades matter everywhere, and he is manifest by the works of his hands, it is a rational inference that matter and spirit are individually developed; and as the spirit springs from earth in its search after the indefinable mysteries of its eternal home, it finds ready prepared for it the body which accompanies it forever. That this intimate association of matter and spirit is manifest in all the vital, chemical, and mechanical forces at work, from the first organized cell in which the body of man is designed, to its maturest development in all that characterizes it as a sentient, reasoning being. That this being endowed with attributes to comprehend its relation to the material objects surrounding it, is conscious that there is no degradation in this

physical existence, for it is the first stage of progression in companionship with its spirit, that terminates only when man has become perfect, even as God is perfect.

It teaches, that that philosophy which shuts up the inner life of the soul, and denies to it the knowledge of its high destiny, fails to prove that there is any absurdity in the doctrine of the progressive development of soul and body, and utterly fails to prove that there is any absurdity in believing that the spirit, after it has left this earth, can return to it and hold communion with the friends and loved ones it has left behind. They have taught us, that in the unutterable longing of the soul to know something about its eternal existence, it attracts toward it those spirits who, in obedience to natural laws, can commune with us, and impress on us a deeper knowledge of the laws of our nature and the designs of God, and reveal to us a brighter insight of his love to ourselves, and to every thing he has created. And in this reflex of their intelligence, continually advancing, continually progressing, they show us that the worlds above worlds, and spheres above spheres, filled with the sentient emanations from the great First Cause, are bound together in one harmonious connection of necessity and assistance. They have taught us that God is love, that the basis of all his laws, natural and divine, is predicated on this divine principle of his nature—that the soul which refuses to act in compliance with this law enjoys nothing, because it has voluntarily separated itself from that harmony which unites as one all intelligence and all matter, from the rudest manifestation to the most perfect development—that happiness is only to be attained by fulfilling all those obligations that love requires—that every soul that is out of keeping with divine order must remain in the license of a perverse will, forever vile, until restored by the regenerating influences of progression, upward and onward forever.

And they have taught us that beauty and happiness, the developed holiness of progressive advance, are the essential attributes of *perfected* intelligence, and that spirit everywhere shall feel His might within, effectuating its full deliverance from all the grossness of matter or sentiment, when the soul shall have *worked* out and perfected its own salvation with fear and trembling. And they have taught us, if we rightly receive and improve the opportunities now afforded us through spirit-intercourse, we shall learn the high pur-

poses of our creation and the glorious destiny before us, we shall see the rays of light flowing from the center and lighting up the dark places of spiritual existence, we shall go to the Source of that light, and bear with us that illumination we have received from the truths the spirits have revealed, and we then shall understand what has been concealed for so many thousand years, *the identity of God's design* in developing and perfecting spirit, and we shall the more readily recognize the truth of this doctrine from the testimony offered us by "things seen and unseen."

I have thus given, as briefly as possible, a part of my spiritual experience for the past two years; and it may be allowed me to say, that it has opened to my view a glimpse of that world hitherto shrouded in impenetrable darkness, and sealed, as it were, from mortal comprehension. In the teachings of the spirits, and in their manifestations, I recognize the manner in which the Founder of the universe revealed himself and his laws to his children on this earth. I can now understand how it was that the spirits of the old patriarchs, purified and perfect, walked with God, and held familiar intercourse with the pure spirits from the higher spheres.

I can now understand how he led them, step by step, and gave them line upon line, evermore brightening their desires as they advanced toward the fullness of time, and revealing to their spirits the grand destiny he had designed them. I see *progress* stamped on every aspiration of the human mind, as it is on every part of God's universe—progress from the animal to the intellectual—from the material to the spiritual, and bestowed on the spirit set free from the grossness of matter, as the highest boon of its Almighty Creator.

Shall the proof of these statements be required, my answer is—I know them to be true by the satisfaction they afford to the demands of my spirit, and in the revelations through my own organism, that the progress of nations, the progress of society, the progress of the Christian world, and the progress of man are all contemplated in the evidences of Divine law, as vouchsafed to man through nature, by spirit-communication, and the eternal manifestations of our common Father.

GEORGE T. DEXTER.

Section One.

Monday, April 4th, 1853.

Through Dr. Dexter, it was written, at his house :

In the name of God, I am Sweedenborg.

Does a man know a star because he seeth the light thereof? Sayeth he, The moon burneth because she casteth a shadow? Does not the water bathe the shore of both worlds, and is not ocean's bosom broad enough for the ships of all nations? And yet a star is but one in a galaxy of glory in the heavens, and the moon's light is borrowed from a brighter orb than her own mountains. She reflects only the light that she borrows. Can you contemplate a whole creation, because you see the light of one star or one moon? And can you determine the extent of the ocean, because you behold one of its waves? Thus you can as little judge of Spirit Manifestations, as you can of the star, the moon, or the ocean. Wait and watch; for ere long, what is dark will be made light, and what is difficult made easy. Do you love your wife or child, and see in them attributes which confer happiness? Can you look on earth in her beauty, her hills and dales, trees and flowers, and not feel as if it was made for your enjoyment? Have you ever examined truly your own hearts? Do you really desire their purity? Are your thoughts the mirrors of your souls? Do you sincerely live that your death may be glorious? Let each one ask himself these questions to-night, and when I meet with you again, you shall hear the truths which it is my mission to teach.

Section Two.

Tuesday, April 5th, 1853.

Through Dr. Dexter the following was written :

I COME from the land where there is brightness and beauty eternal. I have come in the spirit of peace, to greet you, my friends, this night.

SWEEDENBOEG.

I asked you last night if you desired purity of heart, and if you really wished to live that your death might be glorious. I have a motive in asking these questions, for I desire to inform you of the nature of these Spirit Manifestations, and as far as you can understand, unfold to your minds the hidden mysteries of this new idea.

Beyond this life, in the bright regions where dwell the spirits made perfect, are manifest the glories and attributes of God. From that region come I, and my mission is of love. My body is bright, and my soul is visible to the spirits by which it is surrounded, by reason of its congeniality with them.

When God created man, he placed, in his material body, a soul. When the earth was in its infancy, the souls of men were visible to those around, by their affinity or congeniality with the souls of others. When, by the increase of sin, the soul of man was rendered incapable of manifesting its peculiar attributes, it lost the power of making itself felt or visible. But in the world from whence come I, the spirit is visible through its material surroundings; and thus, too, the spirit-thought is met by a congenial thought, and spirits know the truth of those with whom they associate.

I do not expect you will understand all my expressions,

for, to tell you the truth, I shall be obliged to use phrases to express my ideas that may appear ambiguous; but, as plainly and simply as I can, will I give my views and teachings. Profit by all you do understand, and leave the rest for after-consideration.

How beautiful the thought that when God created man he placed in his body a living soul, capable of appreciating its high destiny, and that this soul looked out from its surrounding materiality, and responded visibly to the same affinities in another body! On this, if you can but believe, rests the whole of Spirit Manifestation.

God has no locality. His presence fills the whole universe. Far off in the realms of space, where human eye has never fathomed, where even human thought fails to reach, beyond even the fabulous regions of Satan's resting-place, is the Divine Presence recognized in all the power and glory of the Creator's works, as it is in this little ball of yours.

Say what men may, teach what men may teach, still the soul of man is a part of God himself. It lives for ever, and has lived since ere the morning stars recognized the glory of the Godhead. Man's material creation was as perfect as all the rest of God's works; that is, according to the laws of materiality, perfect in the exhibition of all the powers, and resources, and capabilities which belong to his organism. Man was connected with the world around him by his material organization; that is, he was connected with the vegetables, animals, and the earth, by the affinities which belonged to his material nature. Thus, his material nature responded to the effects or influences of the natural world, as when he became influenced in the healthful indications of the functions of his body, by causes which emanated from the earth, or when his body became affected by the conjunction of certain minerals, as in galvanism, or by the effect of a change in the atmosphere, or by all those natural causes which have had and still have so great an influence on his organism.

How distinct the influence which exists between man and the animal creation! I mean the influence which man exerts on this part of God's handiwork. This influence, emanating from man, is but the visible presence of his spirit, recognized and obeyed by the brute. And you will agree with me, that the spirit of a master mind is often felt when swaying a multitude by its eloquence, or controlling a turbulent spirit by the power of its own will. Man's relation spiritually with the spirit-world is no more wonderful than his connection materially with the natural world. The two parts of his nature respond to the same affinities in the natural and spiritual worlds.

While we admire the harmony and beauty which characterize his connection with your world and the next, we see that by his creation it was designed that he should understand what that connection was, and that he should be able to view it without fear.

It would, indeed, appear unnatural if God had created man without this special knowledge, and it would appear incompatible with his glory that he should have designed a portion of himself to exist for ever in a place of which it should know nothing. The very intention of this creation (a small one to be sure) was that man should understand both life and death, and instead of arriving at a knowledge of death, by the fall (if indeed this be true) he lost the knowledge of death. It is, indeed, true that a knowledge of death was necessary to an appreciation of life, always supposing that the man was pure as his nature could permit him to be. Man's body was made to die. He was not created to live on this earth for ever. It could not be. His whole organization would have been changed. His material part would have been constructed so as to have endured ages of time, and resisted the combined influences of natural causes of decay. Therefore you will agree with me, that instead of being created ignorant of what was to be his destiny, he was created with the knowledge that he was to die, and that in his death he was to live again in

that world which his spirit knew to be eternal; and that he must have had intercourse with spirits is proven by the fact recorded in the Bible, that his nature was pure, and that angels visited the earth hourly and daily, and conversed with man, and that his spirit could associate with them without fear.

Section Three.

Thursday, April 7th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, and through him as the medium, the whole circle present, the Spirits wrote:

TRUTH is the sentiments of the heart, without alteration from the original germ of the idea. Do you feel, this evening, my friends, that you have both uttered and acted truthfully since we last met? Do you feel, have you felt any thing but love and good-will to all, and in your special acts have you truthfully made your thoughts and acts the mirrors of your soul?

SWEEDENBORG.

Turn to the last page where we left off when we concluded.

We did so, and after reading it, it was written:

If man's organism were influenced by the various circumstances by which he was surrounded, so that even the thoughts of his mind were but impressions derived from objects around him, so that, for instance, the odor from a hay-field would call up a host of memories long buried in the caverns of his brain, eliciting by this simple contact of the volatile principle of the grass-flower with the nerve of his nostrils a lifetime of associations, some overflowing with joy, and as fresh and gushing as when they first oc-

curred, and others shrouded in gloom, and o'er the fair horizon of the present time shadowing forth clouds and darkness—even, I say, if influences like these control the action of him through his materiality, and even a blow would produce a loss of all consciousness on these very subjects which memory called from her storehouse, at the request of strong association, how true it is that man's spirit-nature is more closely connected with the spiritual germs existent in every form around him!*

It will perhaps be necessary that I express myself more clearly, though writing in English is not, for me, the most facile way of communicating; yet, as I may appear ambiguous, I will say, that I have endeavored to show that man in the beginning, possessing both a spirit and body, was connected by his body to the material part of creation, as the constituents of his own organization would conclusively show, and that the same agencies and causes which operated on the like constituent in a rock, would produce a corresponding effect on a similar part of man's body, modified of course by the principle of vitality.

Thus, causes operating on man's body operated on a tree or a horse, as a part of the material creation; and the truth of this proposition is manifest in the analogy existing in the vegetable world with that of the animal world. And here I would say, that the principle of capillary circulation, being the same both in animals and vegetables, is proof that the same causes control ever nature's mechanical manifestations, alike in man, vegetable, and mineral.

I have not entered into the mysteries of this material

* I asked for a more definite explanation of this language, and it was written in answer:

Why, Judge, how is it that the spirit feels the impress of some great calamity which is yet in the womb of time? How is it that the spirit recognises place and person, though to the mind it was impossible that memory could recollect, for the eye never before rested on the spot or the man? How is it that in a dream, localities will be presented that are recognized in after years, etc.? By spirit-association calling up in his spirit-part like visions or memories connected with the affinities of his spirit-nature.

compact, as it would not interest you in the least; but all nature responds to my doctrine. In electricity, galvanism, in the tides, in the circulation of the atmosphere, in the return of the various seasons, and in all the economy of life, we witness the powerful influences exerted by the natural world on the organic body of man. But while we admit this as the first proposition, let us for a moment turn our thoughts back to the time when the Spirit of God moved upon the surface of the immense space which lay spread out in the illimitable distance, when out of its darkness he awakened life and light, and from the chaotic confusion elicited order and a thousand worlds. Imagine the Spirit of the Great First Cause moving in the glory and the power of his nature among the germs of suns and worlds, scattered through space, and wandering in orbits as eccentric as the very confusion of a beginning. Imagine at the mere breathing of his voice, world upon world in dumb obedience marshaling themselves in the very orbits which that voice commanded. And then from the elements around he calls up light and heat, and institutes the laws which since that period have governed all nature. Behold! from the farthest verge of this dark space comes gleaming through the thick mists a ray brighter than the sun! It flashes and illumines every thing around. It penetrates into every particle of matter, and out from the incongruous mass it generates that which God has destined should be the dwelling-place of a portion of himself—the body of man!

If this world were alone the abiding-place of immortal spirits, we could imagine how much more beauty God would have lavished upon its formation, and how much vaster would have been its proportions. But beyond the vision of the most powerful telescope there are worlds filled with spirits whose birth is forever and ever. They know no death, and yet are organized with bodies suited to the worlds in which they live.

Surrounded by the very presence of the Creator, even in a more tangible form than any of which we have any con-

as above
as below
✓
ception, they inhabit worlds more beautiful than the poets have painted heaven. There is no necessity for labor, for the purity of their nature renders all effort for sustenance unnecessary. The temperature is alike in every portion, so adapted to the condition of their bodies that the atmosphere confers additional beauty on their complexion, and gives such a radiance to the glowing colors of the landscape, that were mortal to behold it, he would exclaim, "This is indeed the gate of heaven!"

✓ It may have been, that before this world, or the planets and bodies by which it is surrounded, were created, these worlds were created. I am not positive as to this, but I am impressed with the idea that our earth is one of the latest creations of God. And I am impressed, too, to say, that the inhabitants of these worlds are of a higher creation than are the inhabitants of your sphere. They are more beautiful in their proportions, more glorious in the manifestations of their souls, and have a closer affinity with God. It was from the creation of these worlds that the Creator determined to arrange out of the chaos around, a world or worlds which should do his justice credit, and his mercy and love receive the praise forever and ever.

It was thus that God created man with a body to conform to the natural system around him, and also with a spirit to appreciate that he was created by a Spirit with whom he was eternally to dwell.

The spirit which enters the body of the child on being born is the principle or germ. It has not existed previously in a sentient form, but has existed, as a principle, from the beginning. So intimately blended are the two, both body and soul, that the one was created to grow and expand with the other; and though a child may die, yet the spirit grows and expands, and assumes very much the character here, which the full-grown man would have occupied on earth.

I think I can not be mistaken, that the child which has never been impressed with external natural effects, does not receive the soul which was destined for that body, but the

germ enters a new body. The principle or germ constituting the soul has no more to distinguish it than the human embryo has, and neither has the soul any particular body designed for it. The soul when it enters a body, does so the moment that body acquires natural mortal vitality or life. It grows with the body, and assumes its shape, form, appearance, and sex; and this it is which distinguishes, in my opinion, the sex of the spirit; which, if indeed emanating from one source, could not be divided into sexes, but must exist as a principle in oneness of form and substance.

The development of the body, either as male or female, determines the sex of the soul; and as we pass through many transformations in our passage to heaven, that sex the body of the soul always maintains in whatever state it may exist, until it is united with the source from which it emanated.

The return of the soul to the source from which it emanated does not suppose it necessary that the Godhead should absorb it within itself. This would be incompatible with his nature; for while the infinite and numberless parts into which this principle may be resolved does not detract from the power of the Almighty, it adds to his majesty, his glory, and his praise. And as each germ possesses speciality, its separate existence is only in accordance with the nature of his laws, which may be termed PROGRESSION. Good-night.

After that was finished, we were talking among ourselves as to when we should meet again, and the Dr. wrote:

I should like to meet as often as two or three times a week, but as I can not expect your miserable weather will always permit you to visit when you make appointments, and as your business will not always allow you to spend two or three evenings a week, you may set your own time, and I will try and be with you more or less of the evening or day-time.

Judge E., this is a great question, and the Dr., though a doubter, is really desirous of arriving at truth. Now,

therefore, more may grow out of your meetings than you now may suppose. As the oak from the acorn, so perhaps heaven and eternal joy from the investigation of spirituality. So I want you to go hand and hand with him and the rest of the circle.

Mrs. Dexter, your heart will indeed be gladdened with food which will satisfy your soul. Your thirsty spirit shall drink from gushing fountains of pure knowledge, and your whole nature shall rejoice in a freedom from the bondage of error or prejudice.

Section Four.

Friday, April 8th, 1853.

This evening Dr. Dexter called to see me on business. After we had got through with that, and were sitting alone in my library, we got into conversation as to the communication of last evening at his circle. We both soon felt the spiritual presence. He heard rappings, and his chair was moved. Directly his arm was affected in a different manner than was usual, and he sat down to write, as he was conscious, under an influence other than that he had before felt. And we had the following communication:

I DESIRE to say to you to-night a few words in regard to the same subject on which Swedenborg has been teaching.

BACON.

The idea of spheres is but imperfectly understood, and the statements on that subject received and recognized as true, are so but in part, as spirits know but little of space beyond the sphere they occupy. Spirits, after leaving the body, are conducted to localities adapted to the capacities and the condition of their minds, in reference to education, society, and progress. Thus, a highly educated mind—one

familiar with all the knowledge of the schools, of strong desires to understand the laws of nature, and of an affinity with the purity and attributes of the Creator—is conducted to a globe or planet adapted by its locality and formation to develop the properties of his mind to an approach nearer to the plane where the Spirit of God is most manifest in all its power and glory. For though God has no special abiding-place, yet he is more distinctly manifest in some localities than in others. Thus the planets mentioned last night as the abodes of those who never die, are selected as their residence by spirits whose lives on earth correspond with the nature of the inhabitants of those globes.

It is not unnatural to suppose that God's laws must be equal in their effect; and it would be incompatible with his nature to conclude that he places a pure spirit in daily and hourly contact with other spirits, whose minds, in their operation and action, are opposed to his own. Thus to place a good and a pure spirit in a situation where it would retrograde, would be incompatible with the primary law of creation—PROGRESSION. How can a pure mind derive any pleasure from communication with an impure mind? And after the death of the body, the spirit has a loftier aspiration for the good and true, a stronger desire to develop the germ of its nature. It is in compliance with this law that localities are selected in which the attributes, desires, and characteristics of the spirit may be more distinctly developed. All good and pure spirits, therefore, do not reside near this earth, if, indeed, anywhere near it. Some reside millions of miles distant, others on planets near the earth, but all assume the characteristics of the inhabitants of the planet or globe in which they are to reside.

I inquired whether their locality was not governed by the affinity between their characteristics and those of the inhabitants of the planet where they went to reside?

It was answered:

Certainly. Spirits, or rather bodies, are born in other

planets, and it is this influence, both natural and spiritual, which guides the designation of the residence of bodies born on earth or other globes, as well as the locality of spirits after death.

I inquired if those who thus died here, and went to other planets, were there born again into the bodies of those planets?

It was answered :

A man who has lived on earth until old age, who has cultivated his mind and desires, dies.

Now, in proportion to his spiritual development does his spirit seek that place in which he will meet with corresponding circumstances, which will assist him in accomplishing the more intense action of his mind, caused by the loss of his grosser part, or body.

When he arrives at the place of his residence, his body assumes the characteristics of the inhabitants of that place, whose organization is, of course, more ethereal and spiritual than if born on this earth. As spirits do not all possess the same degree of purity of nature, they, of course, must seek a like congeniality of organization, desires, and attributes.

Many globes, spheres, or planets contain inhabitants of far inferior organization to man.

But this affinity is a paramount law in every department of nature. The dog will exhibit his affinity for one person in preference to another; and substances exist in nature whose affinities are so strong that they unite or attract toward each other, even when mixed in the most minute quantities.

I have not time to write much, but I give you these ideas in order that your researches may be made more satisfactory under my friend Swedenborg, at the Doctor's. Ponder on these thoughts, and examine well every raw material, natural or divine, and you will find I am correct.

BACON.

After this had been written, the Dr. and I read it over, and were conversing about it, when suddenly he wrote :

In regard to my identity, I have to say that you can judge whether or not it be Lord Bacon by the truth of my teachings. Now, in order to arrive at a solution of this, you have only to compare my statements with the laws of nature. I can not tell you any thing opposed to God's laws, which conflicts with your knowledge of their influence, that you would be willing to believe. And if, after just and due reflection and examination, you find that what I have said corresponds with your own knowledge of the truth of natural laws, then believe that I am BACON.

We had not been saying any thing as to his identity, and I remarked that I had not doubted it, but the Dr. said he had, and so the teaching was to his unuttered and to me unknown thought.

I remarked that I supposed his meaning was, that if we found him to be truthful in other respects, we would of course regard him as such in reference to identity. And I said that reminded me of a law maxim with which he had once been familiar, and I wished him to write it, as greater evidence to the truth.

And it was written :

I don't know that I can read exactly your mind, but I think it is, that you are bound to believe every thing to be true until proved false.

I said, No, that is not it, but a law maxim which is the converse of your proposition. (I had in my mind, though I did not speak it, the maxim, *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*.)

He wrote :

Do you not know that when you try this test you set on the Doctor's mind itself to solve the question ?

I replied, Yes, I see I do ; but still I thought it might be satisfactory to the Dr. if he would write it.

It was answered :

That would be the *argumentum ad rem* truly. But I have not thought of earth's law for past a century. I am studying the higher law of God now in spheres where there is no other interpretation than that given by spirit.

After some further conversation between the Dr. and myself, this was written :

You will recollect some years ago, when you first commenced your duties as Judge, that in a case under your consideration how much trouble you had to satisfy your mind that you had arrived at a just conclusion, and how suddenly your mind at last arrived at what you thought was right?

I remarked, I did not remember the incident, and asked if he could recall the case to my recollection?

It was answered:

In a case, I think, of a will or property passing from one person to another. You will recollect. The nature of the evidence was very conflicting, and on retiring one night, your mind was suddenly enlightened as to the true bearing of the testimony

I said I yet did not remember the case very distinctly. But supposing it to be so, what then?

It was answered:

I impressed your mind, as I am frequently with you, and have been for years.

I then inquired, Why have I never known that before?

It was answered:

For very good reasons, which I am not yet permitted to explain, but by my fruits ye shall know me.

Again, while the Dr. and I were talking, it was written:

Now, when you were in the prison, did you not, when you prevented that man from being whipped, feel a sudden action of your mind unaccountable to yourself? Why can't you recognize my impression? Have you not lately had some ideas even on the nature of your own duties as Judge, such as you never had before?

I remarked that I did not know exactly to what he referred.

And it was written:

I mean the laws by which you arrive at results, and that oftentimes the laws made by man were ineffectual in accomplishing what they were intended for?

I replied, Certainly. I had so much learned to disregard the old rules and precedents when they stood in the way of substantial justice, that it had perhaps established such a character for me.

I then asked the Dr. if I had ever related to him the incident in the prison alluded to? And I went on to tell him that when I was President of the Board of Inspectors of the State Prison, at Sing-Sing, whipping prisoners was the common mode of punishment. I was very averse to it, and never witnessed it, but felt that it was my duty, however painful, to see what it was which I thus tacitly, if not expressly, sanctioned. That accordingly, one day, seeing a man tied up to the whipping rings, and surrounded by the officers prepared to flog him, I had approached them to witness it, and while I was inquiring of the officers what was his offense—

I had proceeded thus far in my narrative, when the Doctor's hand was suddenly affected, and he wrote :

Pray tell me, if his exhibition of feeling is not evidence of the affinity of his nature with the bad feelings of the minds of those who were preparing to whip him? and if this is not proof of my teaching?

I resumed my narrative—that after I had learned what his offense was, I moved off a short distance, so as to witness the punishment. And the prisoner, who had evidently looked upon my approach with hope, gave up his hope, as he saw I did not interfere, and with a diabolical look, exclaimed, "Whip away, it has never done me any good yet, and will not now." I immediately said, "Then don't whip him. He knows best whether it will do him good or not. Take him down, and we will think of something that will do him good, for we do not whip for any other purpose." And I had afterward so dealt with the man, that without whipping him, a wonderful change was worked in him.

Monday, May 23, 1853.

P. S.—This evening, in my library, the Dr. and I being present, with Mr. and Mrs. Sweet, we resumed our task of revising our notes of Lord Bacon's teachings.

We asked questions, and received answers as follows :

You say spirits know but little of space beyond the sphere they occupy. Does that mean below as well as above? Are some spirits carried straight through the lower ones, or what I. T. Hopper called the sphere of remorse, to their proper place?

Of course they know all about the sphere through which

they have passed. It refers to the sphere beyond. As they are indeed pure, they are carried through the spheres, till they arrive at those bright ones, which are next door to the celestial spheres. But there are only a few, a very few, who are so happy.

Are there some who have no duties in respect to the spheres below them?

No.

Can a spirit know what is below if he pleases?

Certainly.

Are some so ignorant of what is above, as to suppose themselves in the highest heaven?

Yes. Why, there are spirits who imagine that heaven can only exist where they are. They are not wicked. They are good; but they suppose, from a kind of vanity, that the place where they are must be holy ground, from the ideas which they learned in life, and which it will take many, many years to eradicate.

Is our earth the abiding-place of spirits from planets, where beings inferior to us dwell, and also from planets superior, where some of the inhabitants sink below the level of their native world to that of ours?

In answer to the last part of your question, Yes. To the first part, No. Their own abode is bad enough.

But I mean the abiding-place of those who are on their way ascending from such inferior planet?

I understood you as sent to your earth as a sort of punishment. However, I think, if they stay here at all, it is but comparatively a short time.

Why is it natural to suppose that God's laws must be equal in their effect?

Because in every department of nature there is no struggle to deviate from the ordained condition instituted, except in the action of mind. Nothing in life, organized or unorganized, evinces any disposition to rebel against the state

in which its attributes can be exerted. But mind, which can reflect on the circumstances which control or influence it, is oftentimes disposed to question the condition, the result of those circumstances; but the equality of the effect is observable in the certainty of the action, and that no deviation takes place as a law.

Why is it incompatible with His nature to place a pure spirit in contact with others opposed to it? It is done on this earth all the while, and why not with you?

If God places all kind of good and bad spirits together on this earth, certainly the good do not seek the society of the bad, and *vice versa*. Therefore, to insure the happiness of the good, it would be incompatible.

You say, "to place a pure spirit where it would retrograde, would be incompatible with the primary law of creation." Yet it is done here all the while, and why not elsewhere?

No. It can not be done here, or elsewhere, for a pure spirit can not be so situated that it will not progress; but to place a pure spirit in a situation where it would retrograde, would conflict with the nature it derived from God itself. If it could not progress, what would become of it? No spirit, even the vilest, can be placed in a situation where it is impossible to progress.

You say, "it is the condition of the spirit, after death, which governs its selection of an abiding-place, and that it is the same influence which governs the birth of beings in that place." Now, is it true that some spirits, on entering the embryo, are more advanced than others?

This question is answered simply thus (though the text is somewhat obscure): The condition or state which characterized it, when born into the spirit-world, not the spirit born with the embryo. I would say, that to suppose the spirit, when first given off from God, was evil, would knock away the whole of the foundation of our teachings. No. I do not mean so. This I mean: It is this affinity which governs the selection of the spirits born in those good spheres. Where their material nature is less gross, they

possess the ability in consequence, of rising faster than ourselves; but it is after their birth, not before.

You say "affinity is a paramount law of nature." In this life it does not have full swing, the circumstances which surround us prevent it. Now, may not, and do not, circumstances in the next stage of existence also prevent in a greater or less degree?

Yes, in proportion to the ethereality of organization.

You say you "can not tell us any thing opposed to God's laws which conflict with our knowledge of their influence which we would be willing to believe." I don't understand this.

Why, suppose I told you the sun rose out *south*, what would you say?

Section Five.

Thursday, April 14th, 1853.

At Dr. Dexter's this evening, all the circle present, and through his hand it was written:

I am here. I salute you all in the name of God.

SWEEDENBOG.

I mentioned that the spirit emanated from one source, which was God, or the universal germ. This germ has neither sex nor speciality, but being implanted in the embryo, there assumes the characteristics of the body which is to be developed. The exact time when the spirit is introduced into the embryo is not yet known, but the embryo must possess sufficient vitality to permit the development of both spirit and body. Life is distinct from spirit, and the union of the two is not understood, even by spirits of a higher development.

But the embryo must possess sufficient of life* to maintain the spirit connection; thus when the spirit enters the embryo there must be vitality enough to maintain an equilibrium of the two forces. The sex of the human or animal is not determined at first, but there is a stage when the stronger vital forces direct the development, and thus characterize the sex. Now, when a child dies free from sin or impurity, it is taken by spirits of some near relative and conducted to a sphere where the spirit will be developed according to the primary law regulating spirits.† It is

* Here there was a break, during which was written as follows:

I feel a necessity to say that there is no need of doubt in any thing which takes place under the teaching of spirits. Every thing which is now taught, apparently irreconcilable, will in time be made entirely to correspond with apparent and manifest facts visible to all, and so contrived as to be perceptible in every respect to the comprehension of all who choose to investigate. Therefore, let not your minds be troubled. In good time the spirits will reconcile every incongruity, and make that which is dark, light.

I remarked he was speaking to the Dr. It was written:

No. I speak to all. Yet I do desire to convince the Dr., but I want also to assure you, my friends, that there is more of truth in every thing that is told you of spirit than your understandings would be willing to admit, from the seeming incompatibility.

† On another occasion, more than a year and a half prior to this, and through another medium, I received this teaching on this subject:

Those who die in infancy grow up to manhood, and are instructed in the spirit-world in those things which they ought to have learned here. It is a misfortune and a violation of a law of nature to die in infancy, because the object of their first stage of existence is thereby thwarted.

In the spirit-world infants are placed in a sort of intermediate condition between the lower and higher, and they are attended and taught by superior spirits. They are never without such attendance, as I although they are carefully instructed, yet their condition is in some respects unfortunate; for, though by their early death they escape the physical sufferings of this sphere, yet that very ignorance of our sufferings takes away from them the capacity to enjoy the happy change which they would attain if they remained here till maturity. They know nothing of the contrast between that stage of existence and ours, which adds so keen a zest to the enjoyment of those who depart from this sphere after having experienced all its sorrows and sufferings.

Another disadvantage is, they never have many of the feelings and emotions which a longer continuance on earth would have taught them, and which enter much into the happiness or misery of the next state of existence

placed under the teaching of individuals who are specially charged with the education of children, and thus they are taught all the primary knowledge necessary and suitable to their young minds. Spirit is, of all organized beings, more susceptible of impression than the most refined material organization; and thus it is that even in the strongest bodies, capable of resisting the effect of the most potent causes, there is often the greatest yielding. And when in a state of entire immunity from animal influences the child is taught by spirits pure and developed, how great must be its progress! They do not increase faster in size than children on the earth, but the proportionate development of mind, or, as we spirits term it, internal, is beyond comparison.

They soon are capable of appreciating and understanding some of the laws of God which affect nature; and, as their ideas are not mixed or amalgamated with the crudities of animal organization, they are more clear and comprehensive than even those of some spirits who have been in the spirit-land for years.

They have a just idea of God and his connection with all creation, animate and inanimate, and as they are necessarily pure, their affections are manifest in their attachment to the friends and relatives on earth. Little children have often special missions confided to them, and are often sent to earth to perform offices and duties of a high character—for spirits are not judged by age, but by purity. It is a law here, that pureness of mind is certain evidence of ability; for the spirit who can love God without guile, can also understand all the laws which bind man to man, and those also which God has established for the government of the same. Little children are selected to accompany their parents during their stay on earth, and the mother is often surrounded by developed spirits even of those children whose birth she had not numbered with those living or dead. And when in some dark hour of trial, when the hopes and anticipations of life have been blasted, when the

mother is struggling under an affliction worse than death—that of a drunken husband—or when left on earth without husband, with children surrounding her, and she striving to support and educate them, or when from some cause the bond which binds husband and wife is sundered, then it is that the spirits of their children are sent to earth, clothed in forms of dazzling beauty, and gifted with powers to soothe and calm the troubled spirit of that mother, gently and yet serenely instilling hope, where before was dark despair, and raising the drooping heart to look with confidence and trust to God, who is a husband to the widow and a father to the orphan.

And here let me remark, that when you say that time blunts the shaft of sorrow, you mean what I know to be true, that little spirits delegated for this especial office so impress the mind of the afflicted, so charge it with the properties of their own nature, that gradually the mourner loses the poignancy of his sorrow, that by-and-by it is like a troubled dream.

We were now desired to ask questions, and in the course of the writing on that subject, it was said :

There are in an inharmonious circle elements of the same character which exist in a volcano—that is, a strong disposition to explosion. Now I purpose to give you a history of these manifestations, but I find the subject so broad that I shall diverge ; but it will all come out. It may take weeks. The teachings I give you will be interesting, on more accounts than the mere telling you about the spirit-intercourse, and therefore I want you to ask questions to assist in getting at my meaning, etc.

Mr. Warren asked if he had rightly understood the other night that the soul did not enter the body until after it was born ? And it was answered :

No. When there is sufficient life or vitality to maintain a balance between the spirit action and the material action, then the spirit enters the embryo ; but even then it does

not always occupy that germ. It sometimes, from the death of the embryo, returns and occupies some other body.

I made this inquiry: As you say man is connected to the material world by his body, and to the spirit world by his spirit, why is it that the former and its influences are so much more perceptible to the mind than the latter? Is it owing to what I may call the fall of man? That is, his descent from the original purity in which he was created, and his being tainted by the education and circumstances which surround him?

And it was answered:

That spirit-perception in the ancient days was clear and distinct, I believe, and think I know. Now, what you consider the fall of man is only the great change in his mental and material nature, produced by the increase of numbers, the wants and necessities which arose around him, the occupation of his thoughts with the circumstances of his material life, and the entire direction of his mind from spiritual things to subjects of earth. When there were few persons on earth, and the spirit-intercourse was frequent, of course the minds of men were directed to spiritual things; but when the world was more thickly peopled, then it was that the necessities of life compelled man to work, to develop, to invent, to construct, and these occupations prevented that freedom of spiritual communication which existed previously.

But man has never lost that inherent property. This is proven by the erection of temples among the earlier Pagans, and churches among Christians; and even among savages scarcely elevated above the brute, there is always worship of some kind of spirit, which, they believe, is either good or bad.

Spirit seers existed in all ages; and were man now less engaged in things of life, he would, in his present state of progression, see spirits without trouble, and talk with them. As it is, the ascendancy of spirit over mere materiality is one reason for the spirit-intercourse of the day.

Mr. Warren then asked if spirits who left this earth at death visited other planets?

It was answered:

Certainly. If you can limit the space surrounding this earth, and measure the limits of spirit-world by circumscribed lines around this earth, then can you force spirits to remain attached to earth for ever; but the limit of spheres has no end, no side, no center. They are like God, fathomless and forever.

It was inquired, Have you been to other planets?

I have, but not to remain. My mission is on earth. God in his wisdom has placed me here to do what I have to do. I think you, Mr. Warren, misapprehend what I said, for I have written through the Doctor's hand many times before this.

Spheres or circles, as I understand them, mean locations in circles or orbits of globes where spirits go. In the earlier days of these manifestations, there were many forced interpretations given to statements made by spirits, which often assumed the color of the belief of the individual, not from design, but from impression, and consequently often a blending of truth with error was the result. Now, I know that spirits do go to other planets. The soul is a COSMOPOLITE AMID THE ETERNITY OF WORLDS. And is it strange that it should select an abiding-place where it can be most happy?

Mr. Warren here and elsewhere, during the teaching, remarked touching former teachings on this subject and the subject of the spheres.

It was written:

If you will affix a limit to the second sphere, it might seem that you were true. But, Mr. Warren, God's universe is not so contracted as to confine the millions and millions of spirits who die yearly, around this little inferior earth. The second sphere embraces not only this earth, but many worlds, and to each of the globes in this circle do spirits most adapted go. Some are confined to earth, many good spirits from missions of necessity; but the seventh sphere is among the orbs where the presence of

God is most manifest. And the gradations or steps until this point is reached, are in circles of worlds, not miles.

During the evening I inquired, Can you at all times, when you thus direct your attention, read my thoughts?

It was answered :

I am here.

BACON.

Sweedenborg is not with you, and can not therefore read your mind, but I can—not every thought ; but when I am with you, and your whole system is passive, I can read it, but not distinctly, I mean not every thought, but enough to understand their direction and the subject.

Mr. Warren remarked that it was necessary to articulate the thought, either externally or mentally, to enable them to read it. I thought that was not necessary.

Yes. There is no difficulty in reading the mind without articulating words. Thought is articulation ; it exists before the words are formed. And it is this interior thought we get at, not mere words of thought.

I want to say, Judge, that I do not differ from Sweedenborg in his teachings, although he will explain my ideas in a different manner from myself. As he has said, though there may be apparent discrepancies, yet the germ of truth will be made plain when you arrive at the end.

I shall like to see you at your house, and will inform you of the time. Good-night.

Section Six.

Sunday, April 17, 1853.

At Dr. Dexter's, the whole circle present, and through his hand it was written :

It were best during our meetings to defer all matters of discussion until after the subject shall have been finished. There is nothing that retards the magnetic influence so much as any clashing upon the doctrines taught. Time will show you all, that many things supposed to be true will appear problematical at least. Let not your hearts be troubled. In truth and love come I, and I salute you all in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I mentioned, I think, in my last lecture, that the development, both spiritual and material, of the present generation was one of the causes of these phenomena which so confuse and perplex the wise.

Those of you who are investigating this subject, from a desire to arrive at truth, I trust will follow me through my reasoning, eschewing what you do not at present understand, and reflecting seriously on what appears plain and reasonable.

What the nature of all the concurrent causes was, which influenced this manifestation of spirit-communion with material organization, I can not pretend to say ; but that they were by no special direction of the Creator, I am satisfied. All of you must be convinced that the age and the race are far in advance of their antecedents ; that the mental development of man has in fact placed him but little lower than the angels, in the adapting of all circumstances to the improvement of his condition, and in the

exhibition of those properties which evince his genius, his power, and his will.

There are operating on all nature certain causes which produce a tendency to decay, a sort of connection with death (if I can so say), which is apparent both in the character of his mind, in the expression of his feelings, and in also the impression of his senses, as well as those developments which affect the constituents of which his body is composed.

The soul of man, shrouded as it is in this gross covering of clay, has its innate and peculiar yearnings for some definite idea of what shall be its condition after death.

Now this, in my opinion, is proof of what I have before said of its spiritual affinity with the other worlds. Can it be conceived, that as out of dust God formed our bodies, the connection with the whole, of which that dust was a part, was not as intimate as if he had constructed the same body from half a hemisphere? And if, indeed, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul, is not the relation as distinct too, as if he had molded a spirit specially for this purpose, or chosen one from the location where his attending spirits were inhabiting? But this is the mere illustration of a principle.

That there was a first man specially and particularly created to occupy the garden of Eden, is opposed to all my belief of what the character of God is, and ever has been. And here let it be understood, I do not teach any thing opposed to the action of God in all his dealings with man. No! To confine God to the formation of one man, ready made to his hand, can not exemplify the power of the Creator, for if that Creator had established laws for the working of this globe, he must have adhered to their principles, as he himself could not have been their first violator. Now do you suppose there is any difference in the birth and growth of animals and of man? And is there any account of the creation of any animal as man was created? Now this man was created as were we all created, from the same

causes, and their action has not been changed or altered since the world was fashioned. Therefore, as I must illustrate my teachings by material facts, was the material connection definitive and perpetual. And it will always remain so, until the development of man's interior shall have rendered this connection useless—when the understanding shall have become so perfected, and the relationship with spirit so common, that the material affinities will be absorbed in the overwhelming attributes of the soul. Now the effect of progression, both mental and otherwise, in this world, from the action of the spirit-affinity, is felt and reciprocated in the spirit-world; as no advancement in the design for which we were created can be accomplished without a distinct and particular participation in the condition of those spirits who have left this body for that locality. Thus, when any great advancement in this life is made, there is a corresponding advancement in the mental progress of spirits, that is, in the effect which was produced on the mental condition of man. For instance, when steam was applied to the purposes of life, it opened a channel for man's faculties to develop themselves, far more broad and interminable than had been presented to his mind for centuries before. This had a peculiar influence on the spirit-world. While it expanded the minds of men and elevated their condition, it removed many obstacles to the free action of spirit-connection, which had theretofore existed. As when two minds are simultaneously impressed by any subject, a congeniality is established, and the interior is mutually attracted on earth, so a step made in the advance of spirit-life on earth attracts the same characteristics in the other world by the action of the principle of like attracting like. Thus was the communication, which the rust of thousands of years had blocked up, partially opened by this development of man's genius.

Not only does the prime cause facilitate this connection, but any thing which has a tendency to open the resources and faculties of man's mind serves to contribute to this

object, as the sun's rays to the seed which is buried in the earth, warming, fostering, and germinating. When the earth was buried in the obscurity into which prejudice, superstition, and so-called religion had plunged it, there was but little spirit-connection with man; the telegraphic wires did not operate freely—there was no common sentiment on which a communion could be established. The mind was contracted, devoted to the caprice, the dictation, or the imperious will of another. Men either could not or would not think. They shut up within their gross covering the key which would have unlocked the mysteries of both worlds to the view.

But every age has had its epochs, and when there has been one step in advance on earth, we spirits have been compelled to try and make ourselves felt. We have often failed, and though an occasional spark has glimmered in the dark surroundings of thousands of years, not until this period was the way fairly opened for us to walk.

Every age has had its trial, but we have failed to institute any special connection with this earth. The advance made by man, while it removes prejudice, gives the spirits a chance of acting in accordance with the law of affinity with man's spirit.

When the first communication with man was made I can not say. Every age has had its epoch; every age has borne witness that the spirits have had connection with man. The law of affinity is the prime cause in this connection, but the process is this: I, for instance, visit your family. You sit in a circle. Now the material constituents of which the body is composed are alike in the bodies of men. And when you sit in a circle, an equilibrium of the magnetic forces is established, for electricity or magnetism exists in every thing on earth, either in one condition or another. When by sitting, the equilibrium is established, then some one is selected whose nervous system is most easily controlled by the exercise of our will. I stand near him, and finding out what part of his nature is most harmonious with

my own organization, I place myself in direct connection with that part. I have the power to find out or select what that is, and where it is. When I have found it, by placing myself contiguous, or in direct contact, I establish a concurrent simulation with his nervous system, and thus have control of the faculties of his body as well as the influencing and reading of his mind.

When the circle is fully organized, there is a condition established which is characteristic and peculiar. It is a condition in which the nervous system is opened to impressions material and mental independently. The affinities are elevated and more active, and the material condition is magnetically concurrent with our own.

Mr. Warren inquired if man was the product of the gradual progress and development of the creation below him, as is maintained in the work called "Vestiges of Creation?"

It was answered:

I can't tell. It is so far back, our oldest inhabitant here would probably not remember; but I can make some inquiries, if you wish, and let you know some time during these lectures.

It will be better to close to-night early, as some of you are indisposed. So, good-night, and our Father be with you.

Section Seven.

Wednesday, April 20th, 1853.

This evening, through Dr. Dexter, in my library, we had this communication :

I HAVE listened to your conversation this evening, my friends, with much pleasure, and it is a source of great gratification to me that I can enjoy so much real satisfaction while present with you, though I can not verbally participate in the subject myself. If you feel that the teachings of the spirits are beautiful, and if the views which they have presented to your mental eye elicit emotions of joy, how much more will you realize the ecstatic pleasure in store for you when death shall have opened the glorious realities of spirit-life! Eye hath not beheld, human heart hath not conceived, the truths that death will unfold. Oh! when the last pulse is fluttering, when the heart's throb is almost past, when gasping and struggling in the pangs of expiring mortality, then, then will your spirit-eye behold the gates of immortality opening before you, and your soul catch a glimpse of the gorgeous beauties of death. It is well for you that these lessons have made so profound an impression. They prepare your spirits to elicit from each manifestation the real object of its teachings, and hasten the time when you can behold, eye to eye and face to face, the loved ones who have gone on a little while before you.

BACON.

I read over the foregoing, and remarked, The Chancellor is becoming eloquent; hitherto he has been simple and plain.

It was written out:

Eloquent? Who would not be so when he is trying to illustrate the joy, the unspeakable emotions that fill every sentiment of his spirit? Swedenborg tells you that any step taken in advance on earth produces a corresponding accordance in the spirit-world; and our congenialities are so intimate, that an elevated expression, an idea uttered in harmony with the realities of our existence here, meets with a response in our souls, and produces emotions simulating your own. Marvel not, then, that my spirit takes fire from the sparks emanating from your minds, but be careful that your thoughts in their utterance shall attract us near you, that in all things both heart and soul shall harmonize with the truths of God.

I remarked that that was confirmatory of the doctrine that every state of mind has its kindred spirit.

And it was written :

Yes, that is true; and it is an axiom, too, that like attracts like. The habit of indulgence in trifling conversation induces a distaste for the exercise of the higher properties of mind. The uneducated man selects a mind corresponding with his own, and aims not at higher ends. The lascivious man takes no delight in the society of the virtuous; the miser views with disgust the man of large and liberal understanding, and the spendthrift seeks no intimacy with the prudent or careful, but each mind seeks, on common ground, the like affinity with his own in some other mind. Therefore when you would attract those you love most, let your thoughts soar above the lesser details of life unmingled with the grosser feelings of your nature; let the electric bond which connects life with death vibrate with emotions of love, of truth, of good and noble aspirations, and the returning current shall bring back to your consciousness the certainty that you are surrounded by those whose thoughts accord with your thoughts, and whose delight will be to smooth every rough path in life, and to prepare your minds to enjoy on earth a taste of the pleasures of

immortality. Thus it was while listening to your reading that my internal was excited by the emotions of your minds, for know that when there is an accordance between two minds on earth it increases the electric affinities and makes easier the power to communicate. Thus, I say, it was that my internal was prompted by your minds, and I felt myself compelled to give utterance to the sentiments I have expressed. I beg you to understand that my nature has somewhat progressed since I have left the earth. I am not that dull matter-of-fact spirit as I was when a man on earth; but I feel that each day unfolds some new attribute of my soul, some higher power to feel, to comprehend, what I so much desire to know, and that I can realize more clearly the high and important duties I have to perform, and that my spirit learns the more willingly to yield in submission to the commands of our Father.

Here there was a sudden pause, and the Dr. remarked the influence had entirely left his arm; but in a few minutes he resumed his writing, thus:

I left you for a moment, but I return to say I can not tarry long to-night; but before I go I want to say some things important for both of you to know. And one topic is this, Though there is no special order for any spirit to perform any mission, yet in our world as in yours there is a conscious sense of duty, perhaps more vivid and distinct with us than with you. There have been, therefore, certain spirits chosen particularly to communicate with certain individuals on earth who have been selected to teach and disseminate the truths of our teachings.

In spite of your desires to conform to every thing which you believe to be right, there is much questioning if the policy of doing or acting as your mind is sometimes impressed is proper and imperative. This is right; for whenever you are advised to act contrary to the dictates of your judgment, you should hesitate to do the bidding of such command. Were you to act without the full concurrence

of your own mind, we should feel confident that your belief would soon resolve itself into unbelief, and your mind would become disgusted with the continual struggles to perform what would sometimes appear right, but more often turn out to be wrong. But then you must be willing to satisfy yourself, by patient investigation of what is offered, that there is not in any seeming incongruity a real object for the good of the cause to be subserved.

There is much to be done, and I feel confident, however indefinite our communications may at times seem to be, that you will submit for the present to what appears dark or uncertain, and wait patiently for the period to arrive when we can fully and unhesitatingly reveal the proper course of action.

BACON.

Here we supposed the lesson for the evening ended, and as we were conversing about it, the Dr. said it was singular that when he was absent from our communications he could not bring his mind to bear upon them. He could only faintly recall them to memory, and he had only a misty conception of them. I remarked that I thought that that was because he was only partially developed as a medium, and had not yet learned, as he would in time, to distinguish between the operations of his own mind and the spirit-teachings.

Suddenly it was written :

One word before I go, and that will be soon, as I am called away on other duties.

Dr. Dexter, in spite of himself, will be compelled to yield the tenacious opinions of his own mind to the truths of our teachings ; and for nearly two years we have been striving to induce him to yield to our influence over him as a medium.

What he has granted from his affection we shall accept for our own purposes, and through this opportunity satisfy every doubt of his mind. Important, momentous revelations are to be made through him to you, and both are to act as we designate. Therefore we strive to divert his thoughts from any reflection upon the subjects which we communicate each time he is influenced, and thus to free

our teachings from every element of his own thoughts. 'Tis hard work, but it must be done.

Now our teachings on the habits, life, condition, and circumstances of the spirit after death we consider of the most vital importance properly to be communicated, and after months of preparation we have brought you two together to go hand in hand in this labor of truth.

Carefully preserve every thought given you, and meet as often as possible. Ask questions, think, advise with one another; open your hearts and learn to understand each other; discuss the subjects which are written out, and submit your views to us. We will explain; but after all, your own judgment is to be your guide under all circumstances.

I remarked that if I was not unduly detaining him, I should like to ask whether by the words in the early part of the evening, "hasten the time when you can behold, eye to eye and face to face, the loved ones who have gone a little while before you," he meant to say we should shorten life?

It was answered:

Hastening the time when the spirit-intercourse will be so perfect that you can have such intimate converse with the loved who have gone before.

After some conversation between us, it was written:

I have been and returned, but on my way to watch a dying man. To-morrow night Sweedenborg will complete one portion of his teaching. When you and the Dr. next meet I will give you some ideas on the attributes of God, and his connection with man. I am in a hurry, so good-night.

Section Eight.

Thursday, April 21, 1853.

At the circle, at Dr. Dexter's house, it was written through him :

In order that we may arrive at a proper understanding of our subject, I would suggest again that Judge Edmonds be selected to propose questions for the whole circle, that I may answer in this stage of my teachings such questions as you may propose.

SWEEDENBOEG.

I inquired if he wanted us to ask now, or would he defer them to another evening, as I had left my questions at home, and should have to go for them ?

It was answered :

I am about to conclude a certain portion of one part of my lectures, and therefore I certainly desire that you should ask questions.

I accordingly left the house, and went to my own to get my papers. While I was gone, it was written :

But while the Judge is absent, I would say that there is oftentimes an entire impossibility of communicating with circles. The necessity of having every thing harmonious is so great, that when there is an interruption of the full flow of the electrical current, and an entire absence of passiveness of the mind of the medium, it prevents communications, and at the same time develops another principle, which acts antagonistically to the spirit-influence. It becomes very important, too, that the minds of the circle should be directed to the subject discussed by the spirits, so that the nervous properties may readily be seized, to open a more free intercourse with the medium. It is said, that

when the human voice is tuned to the key of any glass body, and the voice is continued at a loud tone for any length of time at the key-tone of the glass, the glass will break into a thousand pieces. Thus with spirit-intercourse. When the minds of both circle and spirit correspond, there is a power engendered which seems to break the bonds of materiality, and opens a new view to both the spirit and man. Yes, my friends, the key-note of the soul is touched, and nature responds through man in one glorious chord of harmony with immortality.

After my return to the room, I propounded this question :

On Thursday, you said children do not grow in size in the spirit-land faster than on earth. On Friday, I heard read a beautiful and otherwise instructive communication from the spirit-world, which says they do. Which is right, and why this discrepancy?

It was answered :

I teach you in accordance with God's laws, both on earth and in the spirit-world. Therefore, when I have said any thing seemingly incompatible with the operation of those laws, and which, to your minds, does not correspond with what you know of the effect of laws which is apparent, then you have good right to question the correctness of my teaching. But I have taught you that God has instituted laws, predicated upon principles coeval with himself, and therefore he can not depart from them. Now spirit possesses organization, and is subject to the laws of that organization as well as you on earth are subject to the laws of materiality. The effect of the laws operating on our organization is almost precisely the same as the laws operating on yours. We are divested, it is true, of the grosser particles of your nature, and we are spared all the evils which that organization induces, yet we do not live here by any special administration of the power of God, neither is the spirit-world conducted by miracle. We act and live, we work, we toil, we develop just as you do on earth, only the internal, which is the essence of the everlasting principle of God himself (as it emanated from him), expands in

a greater ratio than does the body. Take no statements, therefore, that are not based on laws satisfactory to your judgment, and depend upon it, that when any revelation is made, having the garment of marvelousness wrapped about it, that either it is a compound of the medium's imagination, or it emanates from some spirit whose veracity is to be doubted. I therefore say there is no discrepancy to your mind, Judge, neither has there been. You have asked this question to reconcile a discrepancy of statement, but the fact, nevertheless, was as apparent to your mind as the solution of any other question based on the laws which govern the *whole* of God's universe, of which we claim to be a part.

I replied that was so, but in my questions I should often put myself in the place of the doubter, in order that I might obviate objections which it was evident would be made.

I then propounded this question:

The operation of the laws which develop sex is such, that about, if not exactly, an equal number of each are born. Why is this? Or rather, I mean to ask, Is it not because man—born whenever he may be—is created male and female, and each male must have its female for eternity?

It was answered:

Imagine now, God the eternal, the invisible, the self-existent, in his operations, as a being special in form, and possessing the attributes of person, and you are lost in the comprehension of how that being, great and omnipotent as he is, could exercise through all nature the power ascribed to him as a God and Creator. Were he to exist in form, he must have had a correspondence with some other mighty being preceding him, and we might reason thus forever without coming to any idea even of the nature and attributes of our Creator. But when we view Him as a principle, existing in every thing, still resolving itself into direct and pertinent manifestation of the incomprehensible specialities of his nature, we have a basis from which we can commence our reasoning. Now what is spirit? Can

it ever exist unconnected with some sort of materiality? Can it ever divest itself of its covering, and stand in the presence of that God from whence it emanated, special, distinct, and pertinent, in form and shape, a spirit? Have you ever seen the spirit of the Creator separated from the works which He has created? And yet the spirit of the First Cause is as distinctly manifest as if it were divested of its covering, and apparent to the gaze of all. In this world of ours, there is nothing indicating that God is nearer us than on earth. I mean in the localities with which I am conversant. But the self-same laws and the self-same principles in their effect and exhibition are manifest here as with you.

In short, then, God exists as a principle. He is one self and without any distinctive characteristic as to person or sex. Now if this is so—and who should doubt it?—why should the same principles emanating from this source possess properties distinct from the germ from whence they sprang? Why should the spirit of man possess sex, when the spirit of God is characterized by no gender?

No! It is the principle which vitalizes the organization, and it is the organization in some condition of ethereal refinement which is designated by sex, not the soul.

The answer seeming to cease here, I remarked that part of my question had not in terms—though perhaps in substance—been answered, namely, “Whether each male could have its female to eternity?”

It was answered:

Why, no. This fact exists in and through all nature, through even the vegetable world, that the male and female go together, and in some form or shape this division, I maintain, is known to be the case.

Now whether one male is formed for another female, and they twain go hand in hand through the various stages of eternity, I can not say, but reasoning from what I know, I should say, No. For in one stage of existence the affinities which attract male to female, and otherwise, might act as a repellant in another stage.

Besides, when the soul leaves the body, it might be attracted by its affinities to some part of the universe where the mate of this soul would not—could not follow.

Therefore, if I understand your question, I should say, No. I believe that division of sexes materially, takes place under a general law, and has no marked or special direction from the great God, except in the operation and effect of those laws, which in his wisdom he has established for the government of man.

Am I then to understand you to mean to say that, in your opinion, the division of the sexes is an attribute of our material organization, and not of our spiritual? I ask the question, because I have imbibed the idea, and think from some of your writings—though, as I have not time to look, I can not say—but from some *quasi* reliable source, that each human being has its mate with which it unites in your stage of existence, if not in ours, and they two progress on together until they finally unite and amalgamate into one being.

This was not answered at this meeting, from some interruption in the circle.

Section Nine.

Saturday, April 23d, 1853.

This evening I invited Mr. and Mrs. S. to meet Dr. Dexter at my house. Just before they came, Gov. Tallmadge, of Wisconsin, called in, and I detained him for the evening. We five remained together some four or five hours, and received communications through the Dr. and Mrs. S. of which I kept an account, but which were of too personal a nature to be generally interesting.

After some conversation it was written :

SPARE me a few minutes all, while I say to you what is now on my mind.

I mentioned to you the other evening that the feelings and affections of our friends governed our action here, that is, I mean to say, that according to the condition of your feelings, so can we respond. Our affections are the life of our spirit-existence. Now the Governor is a man of strong prejudices, stern and uncompromising in what he considers to be right. He wills to do what his construction of that right is. He believes, yet he doubts, not at the fact, but at the material of thought which is sometimes exhibited in spirit-revelation. Nature to him has beauty, but the beauty consists in the proof of its tangibility. To you who have been led, step by step, through the many devious windings of this mysterious manifestation, there is much taken for granted.

Be assured all, that time is the great solver of this new ism (I will coin a word), and will open to the Governor, as well as to many others, the truth of spirit-intercourse.

Here Mr. and Mrs. S. left, and we thought the intercourse was at an end, and as it was late we proposed to go home and go to bed—

When it was written :

Now don't hurry. There is time enough for sleeping. Your spirit will not sleep, even if your body does. So sit still and learn a moment or two. You can, perhaps, glean from the passing moments of time a pearl of more price than you can find in your dreams.

Listen then. In your daily connection with the world there is much to annoy, to perplex, to worry; but to the man who sincerely looks beyond the boundaries of time, and earnestly desires for wisdom, there is much, very much to be learned even from things which can not be seen.

Time in its passage makes its impress on both man and matter. Learn there is no thought, no action of mind with mind, but makes its impress too on the remotest bounds of eternity. Now mark this expression, and weigh it well. View the great scope of this boundless influence. There is no act either, with the full consent of your mind, but has its direct influence on spirit for good or evil. How intimate, therefore, the connection, how boundless the power that from your minds controls even spirit-action in this world!* It is so forever. God's spirit is in every thing. It pervades every thing, and fills with the evidences of his power every part of his creation. Our affinities for good or evil meet with their likes or dislikes here, and compel, if indeed good, the submission of earthy spirits to the grand, the noble influence of that principle which is the characteristic of our heavenly Father.

We read this over and commented on it, expressing our views of it and of the expansive and profound thought it awakened.

Then it was written:

I have ever been open and frank with you, Judge, and I mean you shall understand me. The properties of your mind partake of the characteristics of my own, even, I am inclined to believe, when I was on earth. It is this connection, this similarity which attracts me to you, binds me

* I inquired whether by "this world" he meant his world or ours? and he answered *his*.

to your society, and leads me to identify my own though with yours.

I know, too, you profit by this relation; and I trust you will permit me at all times to converse freely, and to give my advice and counsel when opportunity offers.

Now it is not always that profound thoughts answer the purpose for which they were designed, without some kind of explanation.

Thus, in the ideas which I have just written, I mean to be understood to say that evil thoughts, opposed as they are to the great principle as the foundation on which the whole universe was constructed, that is, Goodness or Truth, seek out from every part of creation a correspondence with their own identity. Evil is opposed to good. It can not mingle with it, but finds elements of its own to which it assimilates, and a congenial mixture with which it corresponds.

But the good, the true, the beautiful—and they are all alike—find their constituents in that which is of God himself.

It is this which, when spirits are undeveloped, roaming through the boundaries near to earth, and finding no abiding-place, gleaning from no connection the least moiety of happiness, it is this principle of good, this germ of truth, which is breathed on them as it were by the Spirit of God, and impels them to seek for happiness in progression through the higher spheres.

They say, who are opposed to these revelations, we teach doctrines contrary to the Bible.

They believe in a hell, in a place of punishment where spirits are tortured either by other spirits more evil or by their own thoughts. But even were this so (I know I teach no doctrines untrue, no doctrine which the Great Spirit himself would not justify), can you imagine a portion of that germ, pure and self-existent, could be confined in a place where there is no hope, where the spirit could not progress? No; even were this so, were even the hell exist-

ing as it is said, no spirit could remain there; for the impelling force of that power which is of God would send it self-seeking the universe through, to seek that food which its nature so much craves.

Confine it as you may, bind it with bonds of error and evil, and the spirit will burst all shackles, and rise in the power of its inherent might and seek the source from which it sprang. To this source do we all tend, some in one position, some in another, but all arriving at last at that point at which his nature can be most developed. BACON.

P. S.—I add to this communication, that when we were revising it for the press some questions were asked and answered as to its teaching, which we give here.

1. What do you mean by the remark, "the feelings and affections of our friends govern our action here; and according to the condition of your feelings, so can we respond?"

Why, if your feelings are adverse to ours, if they are mixed with doubts, if they are not elevated by the desire of arriving at truth, if there is any thing but the true motive to receive from us the facts and developments of the spirit-world, they repel your friends, and draw around you a class of spirits whose manifestations correspond with the unworthy characteristics of thought and purpose governing your minds.

2. You say, "the spirit will not sleep if the body does." Does the spirit never sleep?

Certainly it does; but I referred to the subject of that night's communication, your wife's presence, etc.

3. You say, "there is no thought, no action of mind with mind, but makes its impress on the remotest bounds of eternity." This of course refers to the future? the future of us above, or of others? And in either case, how is this?

This will occupy too long now, to explain in detail. Suffice it, that all good thoughts influence mind everywhere, for the present as well as future. Evil develops evil, and its control over the mind of man has been witnessed by

every age of the world. The principle is, that God is good, goodness is of God; therefore every thing, thought or act, partaking of that nature, has its relative effect on spirit everywhere as emanating from God.

4. You say, "there is no act with the full consent of our mind but has its influence on spirit for good or evil." What spirit do you mean, that of the actor or others?"

Both. The fate of spirit is within its own control, but the influence of good is as general and specific in our world as in yours. Now if some mind develops a good thought in your country, do not the minds of individuals receive and profit by it in Europe? Spirits in affinity with you likewise receive the good you generate, or rather the good generated through you, and they, responding, circulate it through the spheres where they dwell. So with evil.

Section Ten.

Sunday, April 24th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, Governor Tallmadge being present in addition to the circle, it was written:

In our circle, where the spirits of those we love most do congregate, are gathered together once, weekly, this number, and we celebrate what to us is the Sabbath day. It is indeed a beautiful thought to you, dear friends, that we live and act almost as you do, that we cherish a thousand associations which on earth were most dear. With all my feelings alive to the affectionate remembrances of life with my friends, and eternity with my spirit-companions too, I this

night greet you cordially, heartily, and truthfully, in the name of our heavenly Father.

SWEEDENBORG.

Then it was written :

Now propose your questions.

I first proposed that which is written at the end of the minutes of last Thursday, and it was answered thus :

Beyond the confines of our spheres, away far off in the illimitable distance of space, far beyond the comprehension even of spirit, we are told is the place where spirit is manifested tangibly. It is in this locality, surrounded by the evidences of that power which is capable of creating every thing which has life, or which is inanimate. Now we are told the glory, the beauty of this sphere, is beyond the comprehension of spirit ; that the full flow of spirit is curbed by no material barriers, but gushes forth in one spontaneous stream of love and wisdom ; that the land is delightful, because here all the laws of God work together so harmoniously, that every spirit-thought is in unison : that all the affections, desires, will-power, and the action of the spirit are controlled by the earnest wish to do every thing according to the will and the law of the great source ; that spirit, free from material bonds, is manifest as spirit, as an intelligence, seizing from every object around the very germ of thought before its utterance ; that here, too, does the spirit-concentration emanate, and is sent throughout the earth to control the evil direction which material connection produces. We are told, too, that there is speciality in spirit, that each one retains the peculiar attributes of his nature, so changed by progression, so altered by its upward course, that it has become a god itself, gifted with an intelligence which is capable of exercising the influence just mentioned. Now that the spirit in its passage through the spheres retains intact the connections formed on earth, I believe does prove true in many, very many cases. As the magnet attracts some minerals to itself, and always points

in one direction, so does the spirit attract those whose feelings and sentiments correspond when on earth, and, like the magnet, it always retains them; for the soul, when freed from the grosser parts of its worldly connection, is the more ready to retain and develop those ideas which first opened to its comprehension when in the form, and especially, too, the affections.

Now distinctly and directly to answer your question I can say, that when there are affections formed on earth, death itself does not change or alter them, but when separated, the soul in the spheres develops more extensively the love it first recognized on earth, and is drawn to meet the spirit for whom that love was formed, when it is ushered into the spheres.

If, then, all their affinities correspond—and they are likely to—if there is a basis formed on earth, they will go hand in hand through all the transitions of spirit-life, together loving and being loved, together aspiring, together progressing, until they shall have passed beyond these spheres, and enter the glorious mansions of what may be called heaven.

But they scarce lose their material organization, sublimated it is true, by every ascending step as they rise in the circle of their progress, till at last materiality is swallowed up in spirituality, and they either become incorporated in the whole of the First Cause, or exist as I have said.

The next question I asked was this. In the course of my investigations of this matter, I obtained the idea that man consisted of three things, which I called body, soul, and spirit. Is that the same as what you describe as body, life, and spirit? the life being the connection between the other two? And if so, whence did I derive the idea, and is it correct?

It was answered:

There is no peculiar force in saying “body, life, and spirit,” for the body is merely the constituents of the machine formed and fashioned to hold the spirit, and moved and impelled by the vital power or life.

You are right, and I imagine you gleaned the idea from

main part of spirit

one Swedenborg who wrote many foolish things on earth, which he is willing to rectify in spirit.

I then asked,

These three being one, we know what becomes of one, the body. We are now instructed by you as to what becomes of another, the soul. Now pray what becomes of the third, the life or vital principle?

It was written in reply :

Can you tell what becomes of the light of the sun when darkness covers the earth? Can you tell me what becomes of the light of that star that wanders year after year through the fathomless pathway of space, and after the lapse of thousands of years at last reaches this earth, and is recognized by your eye?

Learn this, that materiality is never lost, and never will be, and when the animal constituents lose the principle which sets them in motion, they again spring up new developed by the inherent properties of their own nature. They exist as the result of their own combination, and never die.

You say that the spirit has no existence in a sentient form before it enters the human embryo, yet has existed from all eternity. Now has it any knowledge (I do not mean the faculty of knowing, but rather information) before that time?

It was answered, No.

I then asked—

You say spirit is, of all organized beings, most susceptible of impression. Why is it that it is so difficult for us to recognize that impression, and distinguish it from the operation of our minds? In other words, why is it that it is so hard to distinguish between our own self-workings and impressions from others?

It was answered :

I should think, Judge, you could answer that question.

Why, if I incorporated myself as a part of your organization, I could readily make you feel that it was my influence, and not the action of your own brain. But the avenues of communication are opened alike to the impression of the spirit and the external world. We do not act contrary to nature, and we can not monopolize your senses.

Therefore you can readily perceive that when the brain acts from the effect of nervous action, at the same time with the spirit-impression, the distinction to be made between the two causes must be very nice and difficult. Sometimes the external impression is strongest, and again the mind will be occupied with a train of thought which usurps all its faculties; and then again you are worried, or angry, or irritable, or impatient or doubting, and the spirit can not act forcibly.

Could we separate your mind from all thought but our thoughts, we could readily make you sensible how hard we try to identify our thoughts with your thoughts.

I next proposed this question :

What do you mean by the expression, "love God without guile," as applied to spirits out of the form?

It was answered :

Are spirits ever out of the form of materiality? But this is for the second part of my lectures. It is a long story, or, rather, it will take a long time to tell you all about spirit-life, that is, *daily* life, and the consequent influences of causes acting upon it. But while I am writing this, I am impressed with the thought of some one present, that the question proposed by you might refer to the earthy spirits near the earth, whose organization is so gross, because it is so mixed with the impelling animal properties of matter. Still I can only say that this will naturally come into the second part of my teaching, and I leave it here.

I then asked—

You say that the spirit sometimes leaves the embryo it once entered, returns (of course to its original elements?) and occupies some other body. Does that ever happen with an adult body?

I should not like to answer that question without more time for investigation. My present impressions are, that that is not possible. Still the laws of God are so multifarious, so peculiar, that I dare not reply to what I can not properly say I understand.

I then referred to a part of these communications, and asked why it was said, in answer to my question, "Sweedenborg is not with you," when he had just been speaking to us, and spoke to us again immediately afterward?

It was answered :

Why, my dear Judge, you are very captious. Do you suppose we are always in one spot, and that it would be any thing unusual if I should leave your good company for a moment? Really, I don't recollect to what you refer; but my friend Bacon, who is present, says that there was an interim in the conversation, and you asked a question referring to the action of your own mind, that I had been called away for an instant, and he being more familiar with its action than myself, took the liberty of answering it.

Then referring to a remark of the spirits, I asked why could not God be himself the first violator of his laws? If he made, could he not unmake? If he established general principles, could he not create exceptions?

It was answered :

I can only say that if he has made this world on established principles, to undo the very basis of those principles would be to admit he was wrong, and consequently take away the omniscience of his nature. If he could change, why has he not done it?

Here I finish the first part of my teachings. Good-night.

Section Eleven.

Wednesday, April 27th, 1853.

This evening at my library, while Dr. Dexter was there, Governor Tallmadge and a member of Congress from Wisconsin came in and spent the evening.

We asked the Dr. if he felt the influence upon him, and we alluded to the intimation given at our last meeting that Lord Bacon would say something on politics, some of us remarking that it mattered not to us what topic, as his remarks would be interesting and instructing.

The Doctor's hand was moved, and he wrote :

I AM exceedingly obliged, gentlemen, for your compliments; but as I said to the Judge some time ago, by my fruits shall you know me.

BACON.

I hardly know what to write to you to-night. I mentioned my desire to say something about politics; but as that is a dry subject, perhaps I ought to say something which will elevate your spiritual condition, rather than direct your thoughts to subjects on which you are as much at home as myself. I can only say that the motives which should govern all your actions in whatever position you occupy, should be such as would ennoble your own spirit, as well as benefit your race. No man ever reflected on a political life with entire satisfaction. The incentives to political preferment are not often unmixed with selfish purposes. The strong desire to rise, the means often taken to accomplish certain ends, are many times so mixed with utter selfishness, that the truly noble spirit shrinks at the after-contemplation of what it may have done, and with

what company it associated. Gentlemen, are you pure, unspotted in your political life?

The question is often asked, What is the true purpose or object of life? It may be said this differs in all persons; that the situation, position, the connections, and the associations change or alter the destiny of all men. True, this may be so; the action of life may differ in most men, but this does not touch the question proposed, What is the true object of life, or for what purpose were men created and placed on earth?

Before the new dispensation, most of you believed that what was told you by the priests or ministers, the chosen guides of your religious life, was really and positively true—that God created man for the especial purpose of placing him in a condition of utter misery if he did not act precisely and believe precisely as they directed. It has always seemed strange to me that so large a proportion of intelligent men could willingly submit to a dictation which a moment's reflection would have convinced them they had no more means of understanding than themselves. To submit to a sort of mental espionage, against which to rebel was rank heresy, is, in my opinion, a kind of vassalage I should not be willing to submit to, even if I were on earth. To take the dictum of some one, gross and material in every part of his nature, and be obliged to yield an implicit obedience, is certainly unworthy of man. Do you, gentlemen, who have seen much of life, mingled with all classes of society and all kinds of men, you who have measured intellect with intellect, and have wandered through many a mazy path to arrive at your present positions, do you really feel that all your early understanding of religious teaching has in fact opened to your minds one truism in regard to your present or future state? Do you realize what the character and attributes of God may be from the sermon of a Presbyterian or a Dutch Reformer? Or do the teachings of either sect give you better assurance of the nature of the spirit that is within you? Perhaps

one or the other of you has, in early life, embraced the doctrine of free salvation, and yet are you any better satisfied that your chance of safety beyond the grave is of more value than another man's, who may differ in belief from you? Can you place your finger on one statement, in all the teachings of priest or layman, which is truthfully explanatory of what the true object of life is?

Look at the little shrub growing by the wayside; it bears no resemblance to the tall branching tree at the foot of which it humbly bows its head to every blast which passeth; and who shall say for what purpose that insignificant shrub is placed in that precise locality? Who shall say that when year after year shall have rolled over its little branches, it may not bow, too, its giant arm—sturdy body too, alike to the storm, as well as the towering oak near which now it so meekly vegetates?

The whole history of man must convince you that in spite of all oppression, despite all combinations, and against all tyranny too, religious, civil, or political, he has manifested the true object of his existence, the sublimation of his material nature, or PROGRESSION.

Now I pretend to say that in every department of nature this statement can be corroborated; that even from the earliest period, when erst the incongruous masses of matter were fashioned into shape by the omniscience and omnipotence of the First Cause—even from this period has, step by step, the whole creation developed itself as from a simple germ.

Let the geologist explore the depths of the illimitable abyss, and he will bring up from the dark cavern of earth's interior the evidences of a step by step progression. Yes, and the astronomer too, as he wanders among the dark mysteries of space, tracing the comet's pathway through the orbits of surrounding worlds, sees in the flashing illuminations of that shadowy germ the nucleus of another world; and even man, from the little mass, unshapen, unsexed, and undeveloped, then springs up step by step, an-

other and important evidence of the truth of this doctrine—a man in form, but a god in spirit.

After a short pause, it was written :

I find the Doctor's mind more engaged with his patients than passive to my subject ; therefore, if you have any thing to propose that I can answer quickly, go on.

I remarked that it had just occurred to me that this was the manner in which Mahomet had written his Koran. Was that so ?

It was answered :

No. He was impressed, and there are many truths in his writings. If they were divested of their admixture with materiality, or earth's materiality, they would shadow forth many scenes of the spheres here. 25/2

I asked mentally, Where is he now ?

Where he is I know not ; but perhaps he is in the beautiful gardens he has so graphically described. At any rate, there is some truth in what he has taught.

Wednesday, May 25th, 1853.

P. S.—This evening, in my library, when we were revising the teachings of April 27th, I asked this question :

There is one profound mystery about this whole matter of spiritual intercourse, the philosophy of which I do not yet comprehend. Hitherto when I have asked about it, I have been told that I did not yet know enough of nature's laws to understand it. Perhaps it is so yet, but there is no harm in trying.

Thus you say, "the correspondence between two minds on earth increases the electric affinities, and makes it easier to communicate." Now how is this ? And what is the *modus operandi* ? How does harmony produce this effect, and discord its opposite ? There must be some natural cause for this effect. I want to know what it is, and how it operates ?

It was written in answer :

I must confess my inability properly to communicate the *modus operandi* of the organic connection. But it appears to me thus : When your spirit is passive, or rather in harmony with ours, the material part of your nature corresponds with the power we possess, like the gradations in

music. When you strike a certain note, a third above (or below), a fifth, or a seventh, etc., it produces a chord. The system is in *rappor*t, the nervous structure is open to the impression of the nervous correspondence of our improved or less gross organism. Recollect, we possess more nervous ability than you, as there is less of matter in our structures, and therefore we are bound by fewer impediments. Our magnetic power must be increased, and the spirit-communication is more direct and distinct. I don't know that you can understand, but I will try and explain more clearly to-morrow night.

BACON.

Section Twelve.

Sunday, May 1st, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's, Governor Tallmadge also being present.

Through the Dr. it was written :

PLEASANT it is to meet you again, my friends, and I congratulate you that in this spot you may not again be disturbed for some time.* With feelings of affection and love to you all, and with my spirit gushing forth with joy for the opportunities I enjoy in communicating with you, I again most sincerely greet you in God's most holy name.

SWEEDENBORG.

To the spirit just wakening up to the realities of spirit-life, there are sensations and emotions as indescribable as they are new. The eye accustomed to look on scenes in

* The Dr. had been moving his residence.

which matter is arranged with due regard to law certainly, and yet crude and irregular, the habitations of man, and man and animals all existing as fashioned and formed for earth, were the daily and hourly objects which greeted his vision. And then his eye, or his spirit rather, looked through a medium formed of matter, itself perhaps as gross as the objects which it transmitted to his brain, and this nature assimilated both the object and the agent to the material condition of his system. His thoughts that were influenced by the same causes which acted on each separate sense partook of the character of the scenes in which he moved, and if his mind, improved by study and research, was enlarged and progressive, still there was manifest the profound influence which nature, in which he lived and moved, had upon his whole being. But when awakening from this sleep of death, and opening his eyes to the world into which his spirit was ushered, how strange his thoughts, how marvelous the sensations which rush through his brain with lightning rapidity! To you, who have some conception of spirit-life, the ideas I have suggested will not appear so passing strange. The spirit-bond which connected it to matter is severed, the link of life is broken, the spirit freed is disengaging itself from its earthly trammels. There lies the body stretched in death. How unlike the spirit which is floating over it, still unconscious, still unable to think, but just born into the life of the spheres. As it floats over the body which was so lately its abiding-place, there come to it, drawn by their affections or by their duties, spirits possessing form and shape, beautiful beyond thought. They support this spirit-child until it recovers its consciousness, and then with the impress of the last life-thought still vibrating on its brain, with the emotions of its heart still unsubdued by death, with its whole nature palpitating, and even suffering at the thought of the separation from loved, aye! fondly-loved friends, wife or children, this new spirit meets the new impressions and scenes which surround it. Its agonized mind writhing with death, and with all its

nature struggling within its internal, it opens its eyes to the unspeakable glories of a new world. Then all the spirits whose lives are pure, whose mission being accomplished toward it, now take it by the hand, and bid it look around, and behold the things which are old have become new. Think you, with all these new objects, both of spirit-life and spirit-matter coursing their way through the several senses of its brain, there is not awakened an impulse and desire far beyond the dull and confined sensations of life? Think, too, that it is divested of all the contrivances which in life so circumscribed its mental action, and that its freed spirit can now quaff deep of the intoxicating draughts of joy unspeakable that are presented to it on all sides.

✓ Spirits when they awake to a sense of what they are, are not permitted to talk much, neither are their minds tasked with a succession of new impressions other than those which first meet the eye. After the friends have taken charge of them for a while, they remain under their teaching for a time, not sermons or doctrines, but a sort of history of what is before them, and then they are left to the true manifestations of their nature. Now, if good and pure, if their minds desire the high and holy, if, in simple language, they wish to ascend, their affinities are their guide. They can not mistake. They are irresistibly impelled to go forward to the place where they meet with all the circumstances and conditions which conform to their desires or the wants of their nature.

✓ Now, be it understood, spirits can not conceal their true feelings like man. The very fact of being a spirit opens the avenues of thought and motive to all. Thus, though their desires are as different and as varied as are their forms and countenances, yet they are fully cognizant of what spirit means and of what spirit requires. It is this principle which, as I have explained before, impels them to locate where they will be most happy.

Now spirits possess a material nature, and this nature or form in some is so gross, that it is almost subject to laws

as imperative as those on earth. I mean as material laws. Their material nature is under influences which require obedience, and though there is none of the physical suffering you have, yet there is as much material necessity and absolute want in proportion to the grossness of their natures as there possibly can be in your material world.

Under this statement you can plainly see what will follow.

Thus we have as much of life with us as with you under the wants of our nature, and it would be simple in the extreme to suppose for a moment that God made a material solid earth, and placed in it spirits who were so impalpable that they could not adapt either their bodies or spirits to the necessities of climate, of soil, of food, etc. But we are sent to places (by our affinities always) where we can comply with all the circumstances, just as you do when you select a place to reside, though our population is divided more rationally, more justly, than are the divisions of classes with you. We eat and drink of the fruits and vegetables of the countries where we reside. This, however, we do always, as far as I can learn; for as long as matter exists, it can not maintain itself without support from some external source. And then if we eat, there must be some one to grow the food, for the climates do not always produce spontaneously food for all. But this is a matter of choice who shall labor, and we all, in our neighborhoods, take turns in so doing, and thus all do their duty to themselves and others. Most frequently spirits associate together in neighborhoods or communities, composed of members varying from fifty to five hundred, and while the absorbing topics of progression and purity, of development and affection, occupy our minds mostly, yet the usual duties of material life are just as incumbent on us as with you, always modified by our organization and the circumstances in which we are situated, and the place where our affinities direct us.

Well, now you have the life of spirits as far as regards

class
division

Food

1. diet
2. countenance

their bodies; and what think you is the proper food for their minds? Every thing which can open the beauties of God's handiwork, which can penetrate the assumed mysteries of his creation, which can typify his works by a resemblance or correspondence, that is, as in painting or sculpture, or any thing which by intuition compares with any of his attributes, as music, melody, or that which opens the internal to a better appreciation of obligation or duty, as the action for others, whether out of the body or in the body, or that which gives us an understanding of God as he is in a whole, as the investigation of the principles on which are based his laws—these are the proper food for mind, and it is eagerly sought for by spirits. We stand on a broad plane overlooking two worlds, with our organization so sublimated that we innately understand the true connection that exists between matter and matter, and spirit and spirit. We live in this world of spirits, but our duties are as much with you, and on your earth, as they are with spirits and spirit-land. I will explain all this by-and by.

I expected to be done, but I have a word to say. When we visit your earth, we are not ordered to do so by any higher power than that we set up over ourselves. We can not act contrary to law, but this law, though predicated on God's law, is but the emanation from other minds. We choose our rulers, and our organization of government is alike under the direction of ourselves.

Thus we select those who are the most advanced, whose minds have been occupied in studying the necessities of man's (as we call ourselves) nature, and his connection with man. They understanding what is most necessary to promote the happiness and progress of all, are appointed by the expressed consent of a neighborhood to look after the well-being of the members of that neighborhood. But it is no forced administration of law, it is no tyrannical exhibition of authority, it is simply a recognition of the principles of right. This is enough. With the progressive spirits there are no quarrels.

Section Thirteen.

Wednesday, May 4th, 1853.

This evening Governor Tallmadge was in my library, accompanied by a friend, Judge Baker, of Wisconsin. Dr. Dexter came in and was soon influenced to write:

I AM glad to see you to-night, Governor, as I wish to say a word to you on a personal subject; but as well to all as to you, I wish to say, for the time I can spend with you, I cherish the opportunity as one of the green spots even of my spirit-life, and trust not only I, Bacon, may derive good, but to you it may be the open door of truth. BACON.

When you return home, and after a few days shall have elapsed, you will meet with a trial which will disturb you somewhat, and may annoy you for a long time. What the nature of this trouble is I can not say; but this I can say, it is connected with your political life, and is also connected with a matter referring to your action with certain individuals, to which I alluded when the other evening I said, "Beware of false friends." The matter can not, however, permanently disturb you, or in any way injure you; but, as I am informed by one who takes great interest in your affairs, there has been some consultation among certain parties which will disturb your mind rather than affect you any other way. This, however, I only repeat from hearsay, and I do not vouch for the correctness of the statement, only being requested by one who loves you to mention it when you were present.

Your own reason must govern you in believing or disbelieving. You can judge best whether there is any thing

which can affect you and annoy. The way to act will be under all circumstances to act nobly, truly, rightly, and leave the end to God.

To many men the predicting of trouble is a source of great care and anxiety. It seems to unsettle their minds, excites the imagination, and they magnify little troubles that may occur to mountains which they can hardly compass.

I have chosen this opportunity to mention the matter referred to, to the Governor, because, if it did take place, he would view it as a circumstance of life, and would not be vexed with any premature anticipations of evil in the future.

How strange a compound is man! To-day strong in the conviction of what he considers right; to-morrow trembling and fearing in respect to the very principles he has avowed as the guide and motive of his life. It is not strange to us it should be so. Were man influenced by spiritual causes alone, were the avenues to his mind blocked up by no material barriers, there would be a constant succession of impressions emanating from a source which must be infallible, as they would come from those who would have tested the competency of earth-life and spirit-life, and could judge of the power of either to afford the true solution of all the mysteries of his nature.

But then man is not controlled by external impressions, be they what they may; his organization is material, his impressions are also material, and, of course, his conclusions and comparisons, predicated on material evidence, can have no reference to that which neither his mind nor his spirit recognizes as spiritual. Nature is ever varied; but with us her forms, though more elaborate, are yet more diversified than with you. With you every spirit is of the grossest kind (figuratively), and, of course, placed on earth as you are, surrounded by matter in every shape, with your own organization corresponding to the nature of the material of which the earth on which you live is composed,

there must be a succession of impressions, the nature of which simulates the objects by which you are enveloped.

But there is an evidence of the truth of spirit-revelation which I imagine has not yet been noticed, and that is material, as is the nature of man. There is, to him who believes, an entire change in the character of his mind. His spirit, forestalling time, leaps over its boundaries, and catching the shadowy outlines of spiritdom, drinks in the sublimating essence of that view; and the draught, like the fabled nectar of the gods, changes the gross nature of spirit and body, and renders the man susceptible to all those sensations of meekness, of tenderness, of charity and love, which mark him as the man whose heart is indeed vivified and renewed by spiritual intercourse. In the word spirit, in that connection, I do not mean spirit is gross, but the amalgamation is gross

Here Governor Tallmadge remarked that he supposed he had not charity enough. He had charity for those who did not believe, but he had none for such persons as the writer in the *National Intelligencer*, who, without investigation, was willing to revive against those who had investigated, the fires of Smithfield and the hangings and drownings of Salem.

It was written in answer :

No, Governor, not that you have not charity enough, but perhaps that your charity is not properly directed. Let the dog bark, the cat mew, or the ass slavishly toil for mere animal existence, still nature will assert its just claims, whether in man or brute. And to him who, without evidence of either right or wrong, can denounce that as untrue which he has not investigated, you may justly attribute the true prerogatives of his nature. He will bark dog-like to the compulsion of his brute-like organization; and he will toil like the ass, to perpetuate the slavery of opinions to which he is bound by error and prejudice.

It is not worth while to contest the truth of spirit-revelation with those who do not believe. Truth is like the misty vapor encircling the mountain's top. The sun of error, of

superstition, of priestly teachings may, in its full blaze, dissipate the cloud, but its cloudy substance is disseminated through the whole atmosphere, and descends in grateful showers to replenish and fructify the thirsty earth. So with man. Argue with him, and he battles with you. Prove he is wrong, and, Proteus-shaped, he attacks you again with arguments founded on that very error. But let the cloud rest on the mountain, and when disturbed by the sun or the wind, in grateful sprinklings it returns to foster, to cherish, to develop the nature of its own godlike virtues.

The Governor here inquired whether it was to be understood that it was better not at all to notice such assaults as he had alluded to?

And it was answered:

Not notice in anger, or with the appearance of vexation but with the calmness and simplicity of truth. You can not convince by denunciation. There should be a grand dignity in your answers, a moral personification of your communion with spirits, which will exert a more potent influence on the world than all the replies which you can make to attacks on our cause in vexation or a hasty zeal.

Dr. Dexter then asked Lord Bacon if he would not arrest his communication a few moments, while I should read to Judge Barber some of Swedenborg's communications. He answered:

Yes, I am always instructed by any thing from Swedenborg.

I then read for half an hour or so, and when I finished, it was written:

I guess we will all go home, and so good-night.

BACON.

Governor Tallmadge and Judge Barber then left, and the Dr. and I remained in conversation until after midnight. Suddenly the Doctor's hand became affected, and it seemed that they were going to write again.

I remarked, What! do they never sleep?

And it was written:

Sleep? certainly, Judge. How can our bodies support the wear and tear of life without sleep? But the nearer I

approach those I love, the more I identify myself with their present feelings. Thus I feel inclined to-night to be cosy with you two, and to open my heart and tell you of its high and noble aspirations, to tell you with what joy I shall wend my way to those worlds spoken of by Sweedenborg, when I shall have accomplished the object for which I now labor.

Oh! could I take you with me, and with the velocity of thought wend our way through space, looking down on worlds moving in their orbits, filled with spirits whose only thought is onward and upward! To point out to your ken the source of those things, the manifestations of which only, you are permitted to behold. Together to learn from the observation of his works, the nature and attributes of the Creator. Together to develop the germs of our own characters, and together to strive onward toward that sphere where the full conception of our yearnings shall be gratified.

When we should have at last arrived at the place of eternal rest, can you conceive the sensation which would pervade our spirits, freed from materiality, when in daily and hourly communion with the millions on millions of souls liberated from every thing which partakes of earth, we enter forever into the real joys of our eternal existence?

No human heart can realize, no human mind grasp the thought which now fills my nature, and lifts my spirit even beyond the barriers of this world.

Oh! 'tis then I feel that there is in all the works and laws of God this one eternal principle of love. For what can exceed the love of that being who has prepared a heaven where mind can grasp the every thought of life and death! Yes, even you, toiling and laboring to obtain that which will satisfy your minds on earth, can you realize what that joy must be when there is no obstacle to the fulfillment of that desire?

But I must close. If I am too prosy, learn that the spirit never tires of striving too, and that though we lay up no treasure of gold, we are more than repaid if our

efforts enable you to treasure up one truth from our teaching, or to cast off one error from our doctrines. Good-night.

BACON.

The Dr. then, in our conversation, alluded to an idea I had uttered, which, he said, had disturbed him with doubts, etc. After we had conversed some time on that subject, it was written :

It would be better that you do not go on, if you have a doubt of our truth. I point to the ever-living God, who is truth. I teach you humility, self-examination, and trust. I talk to you as spirits talk to one another, believing you feel our truthfulness, if you can not see us. Do you believe you have seen your wife? Believe, then, it is she who put the thoughts into my mind uttered to you, and that she it is who has read your heart better than you know it yourself. Doubt if you will, but believe you must. Learn, you are not perfect, but that your failings and faults will be just as freely told you as your capacity to aid our cause.

BACON.

Section Fourteen.

Thursday, May 5th, 1853.

The circle met at Dr. Dexter's, present also Governor Tallmadge. Before any thing was written, I suggested whether it would not be better, the first thing after every teaching, to propound the questions springing from that teaching, as thus the subject would be kept compact in these papers.

After a while, the Doctor's hand was moved, and he wrote :

HAVE you ever thought, my friends, of the remark of our Christ, that when two or three were gathered together, his spirit would be among them? When even in the privacy of your domestic relations you are retired within the charmed circle of your homes, then it is that the spirits of your dearest friends departed are with you, enjoying with you all the joy and comfort which the social connection affords. Then it is, that when the heart seems gushing forth with affection that your spirits are so nearly and intimately approached by your friends, and the fullness of your heart is the reflection of their impression.

To-night you are surrounded by many spirits of those who, when on earth, you dearly loved, and who to-night unite with me in the blessing—God cherish and guard you.

SWEEDENBORG.

I shall be glad if your questions are proposed, Judge, and in future the course you have mentioned may be adopted; but you will not expect me to answer in detail all you ask, as that might take up too much time; but I will do the best I can to satisfy you.

I then proposed this question.

You say, "there lies the body, and the spirit is floating over it." In

what does it float? Has it, then, a new body? Does it take that body with it from its old body, or is it a new creation independent of the former body? In the vision which I saw of my brother-in-law's death, did I see accurately the process of dying in this respect?*

* I can render this intelligible only by the following extract from my journal:

November, 24th, 1851.

My wife's brother-in-law, residing in Brooklyn, has been ill for some four or five weeks, and gradually falling away, so that it was evident he could not live long.

On Sunday, the 17th instant, I spent most of the day with him, and in the course of the day he revived enough to converse with me about his approaching departure. I took occasion to explain to him, as I had learned from these communications, what death was, and what the other state of existence was, on which he was entering. He was able to understand me. * * *

I remained with him the whole of the following Saturday night, and returned to my lodgings early on Sunday morning. I lay down on my sofa in the course of the forenoon, and while there, I received a very vivid impression of the manner and circumstances of his death.

He had breathed his last, and I saw what I supposed was his spirit-body issue from his mortal body in the shape of a cloudy frame, and directly over it, and in the room where it lay, it assumed the human form, but it seemed to have no intelligence. Suddenly it lighted up, was alive and intelligent, and I was impressed that that was caused by the soul's leaving his fleshy body and entering his spiritual body. As soon as that intelligence appeared, he looked around as if somewhat in doubt where he was, but he immediately seemed to recollect that his present condition was not strange to him, and to know from previous instruction that he was in the spirit-world. He then turned his looks to his family and friends who were around his corpse, and bestowed upon them a look of great affection, and was then wafted away on a flood of light far into the distance, until he faded from my view.

While his spiritual body was thus forming, three spirits were in attendance. One, his son, who died twenty-seven years ago, at the age of three years; another, a grandson, who died a few weeks since, at the age of four years; and the third, one of mature age. His son's attention was directed solely to his father, and his grandson's principally to its mother, who was present. He seemed to wish he had some means of making her know that he was present, and that he could throw himself into her arms, so that she could feel it. He seemed to be full of hilarity and joy, and to desire to communicate his happiness to her. The attention of the third person was directed partly to him and partly to the friends around, whom she had loved so well.

When at length they began their upward journey, they all bent upon us looks of great affection and gladness. As they progressed, they were from time to time joined by other bright and happy spirits; and as they faded in the distance, they unitedly gave us a parting look of happiness and affection that has no parallel on earth.

In answer to this he wrote :

Although I may pretend to some power of concentration and memory, yet, Judge, that is a long question, and involves many points, therefore, if you please, one point at a time.

Well, then, I will first ask, Has it a new body ?

Yes, most certainly, a body composed of new materials, refined and sublimated, but still entirely material.

Next I ask, Does it take that body with it from its old body ?

It does not take the materials from the old body, but it is a new creation, as instant of life as was the corporeal germ when it vitalized the embryo *in utero*.

I remarked that the other part of my question, referring to a vision I had had, was of moment only as illustrating the subject.

It was written :

Of that I can not judge, but the spirit when leaving the body leaves it for another probably ready for it. Even spirits do not see the process. If it has been vouchsafed to you, it has been for some special purpose.

Mr. Warren somewhat criticised the expression, "instant of life."

And it was written :

Instant of life is the proper expression, as I maintain, and means just what I want to express.

I then propounded this question :

You describe what is the fate or course of one whose aspirations are upward. Please describe also the fate or course of an opposite one— one gross, material, and very sinful.

It was written in answer :

Let your minds be entirely directed to the answer of this question.

I am glad you proposed it, for it is a subject which I intended to incorporate in my lectures ere this ; but the ideas have been so varied and numerous I could not do it before this moment. I now say, when the good man dies, or rather one who has done all he could to live properly and justly,

he finds a new world opening to his view, and a new race of beings inhabiting it. The very air is redolent of peace and joy, and the whole landscape is filled with every thing so beautiful, that he is impelled to stop at every step and drink up, as it were, the rich draughts of pleasure which are everywhere proffered him. To his mind the opening of one object or view, whether of world or thought, is but the incentive to a greater effort to progress, and thus he is led from one point to another, culling by the wayside, and from hill and dale, from spirits of friends and spirits of strangers, the truths which his soul most desires to know, until he has arrived at the place which the true affinities of his nature assure him is the locality where his probation is to be passed.

But to the spirits who have lived a life of selfishness, disregarding the claims of their race, who have toiled and struggled for no other motive than to accomplish their own ends, at no matter what cost, who have bowed their spirit to the rule of error, and who have delighted to circumvent their fellows, who have, while they professed to serve God, denied him by their acts—they die, and their spirits enter new bodies. Now I beg, in this connection, to say that, there must either in man's residence on earth be the development of his spirit and the corresponding progress, or there must be a retrogression and a consequent depreciation of the true desires of his nature. Thus it is, when the spirit by its acts retrogrades the true type of that condition is most distinctly manifest after death in the acquired tastes of that spirit for the scenes which on earth afforded him pleasure. And it turns from the contemplation of what is around, above, and beyond, to the constant yearning after that which is below, which is gross, which is circumscribed in the limits of your globe. It does not associate with those whose aspirations are for the good. Its affinities lead it toward those whose desires correspond with its own, and it chooses for its companions those whose habitations are near this earth, and whose tastes are of the same character. Its body

is not as specifically light as are those of the progressed spirits, for with us as with you certain localities change the very particles of our organization, and develop characteristics really opposed to the intent of our creation. I cite in corroboration of this statement the tribes of Hottentots, whose organization is so gross that the very formation of certain organs of the body is so changed that they do not resemble that of a human body. By living near the earth, obtaining their sustenance from the bodies near to it (for we can transport ourselves miles without number in a moment of time), they acquire an aspect differing widely from our external appearance. Their bodies are sublimated, it is true, but still, were you able to see them, you would scarcely distinguish the difference between them and men of your own earth. I now speak of spirits whose minds are not really evil, but not progressive.

There is another class to which I will direct your attention, as belonging to that division who are really bad, and who, by a long course of evil life, have denied their obligations to man, to God, and to the laws which he has established. After these spirits have passed into their new bodies, they are so heavy, so much more dense than are the other spirits mentioned, that they can not maintain themselves even near the earth, but sink far below it, and are really of so dark a hue that they are almost black.*

Bahs?

Now the place of their residence is far below that which I ever had a desire to visit, and I can not tell you from actual observation what it is, but it is said to be an extensive plain, with but one single mountain in the center. So attached are the inhabitants to this interminable level that they scarcely attempt for years to ascend this mountain. Now it is almost always night there, or rather a condition midway between night and day, and if they were to ascend this mountain, it is said they would catch a glimpse of the

* This teaching is so closely coincident with some of the manifestations which I have witnessed through other mediums, that I insert one in the Appendix as calculated to elucidate the subject. See Appendix E.

brighter lands beyond, and a desire would be created in their minds to leave this place for the world beyond. How true this is, I can not say; probably there is some condition or state resembling this, and it may be this is true. Sometimes, inspired by their own wicked feelings, they make a strong effort and force themselves to your earth, and then it is that some unfortunate one is impressed with wicked thoughts, and is persuaded to do wicked things; but God in his infinite wisdom does not leave the administration of his divine or material laws to beings of so corrupt a nature.

He prefers that man shall have no one to blame but himself and the circumstances around him for his sinful acts; and it would conflict with the laws he has instituted if he permitted man to be controlled by spirits inferior to himself. But you can imagine the darkness of ignorance into which these spirits are plunged, by comparing the benighted cannibals of your own earth with yourselves, only adding to the comparison the fact, that in one it is a developed spirit, advanced one step beyond earth, and in the other it is of earth.

The first class referred to are those who confuse these revelations most, particularly by misrepresentation and deceit. They are always on the alert to seize on impressible mediums, and through this channel to impart incorrect statements relative to "life in the spheres."

Now, allow me to say that the first idea embraced in the revelations made to your family, Dr., was the correct one; that is, that spirits (unprogressed ones) dare not assume the personality of any other spirit, so you demand of them the truth in the name of God. But they misdirect, bewilder, confuse, make false statements of the nature of these manifestations, and would willingly create doubt; for these spirits are allowed to mix with other spirits whose duties bring them to earth, and thus they are enabled to make false statements regarding them. In short, they delight in inculcating error, as they did in receiving and learning it when on earth.

The dark spirits do progress, but it is in a cycle of years. The mischievous spirits progress also in much less time, but both have laborers among them from the advanced spirits, whose duty and pleasure it is to instruct, to disabuse their minds of ignorance and prejudice, and to point them to God as the source of all things.

Have I answered your question?

Mr. Warren made the inquiry, as to spirits taking the form after death. Does not any portion of God clothe itself with his form, or an approximation to it in proportion to the spirit's progress, and would not this account for gross spirits taking an imperfect and less sublimated form than those who have become more godlike by their advancement?

In answer it was written :

Now I must close. I would say that that principle perhaps does exist in the development of the body, but as a principle pertaining to the development of all matter, clothing itself according to law, in some form, which is the consequence of the effect of that law. How it takes place I can not tell. When you and I, Mr. W., shall have reached the last stage of material life, then, indeed, we may turn and look at the operation of the principle of every law which governs nature. Good-night.

Section Fifteen.

Sunday, May 8th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, it was written :

THE night is dark and stormy, and the air should be chill and uncomfortable. You draw near your firesides, and sit conversing with one another, and opening your hearts to the genial influence of social connections. With us, we do not feel the effect of storm or cold when approaching your earth, and our spirits are not clothed with such garments as hide the true purposes of our hearts. We converse with one another, but our meaning is perceived without the expression of thought ; and the farther we progress, the more is our spirit manifest through all the developments of its covering. But to-night, in spite of rain or chill, I meet warm hearts and strong desires to excel, and I give you a response founded on the very basis of our creation—a response of love and truth, and greet you in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

I propose you ask your questions.

I did so, and asked first this :

You say they are impressed to go forward to the "place," etc. *As you thus describe a material heaven, let us know where it is located, where is the food grown, and where are located those little communities ? What is the soil in which the food grows ? Is it earth or air ?

It was written in answer :

I can answer that to-night, if you wish ; but as it will take, perhaps, the whole evening, would it not be better to defer it ? Still, I will be governed by the wishes of all present.

We expressed our wish to have the answer now, unless he had something particular which he wished to communicate.

He wrote in reply :

No, nothing but the continuation of my teachings ; but I will answer this, and, as I may write for some time without stopping, you can amuse yourselves as well as you can, *without*, however, interfering with the magnetic connection of the circle.

My experience will, perhaps, be taken for a direct history of the subject proposed. My motives have been vilified and questioned ; and even while on earth, I encountered much opposition from all classes of men styling themselves Christian, who denied the main features of my doctrines, and contended they were untrue, because I could not have had any association with spirits.

I was called crazy, and my writings were censured as blasphemous, because I had given the experience and lessons of a life, the object of which was to penetrate into the arcana of nature, and the design of which was to live as pure as was possible for my material nature to permit. What I taught while on earth I was satisfied was correct. I was directed by spirits, whose lessons and explanations I thought I understood, and my earnest desire was reasonably and rationally to explain the wonders revealed to me, substantially as I viewed them, and to give to the world, in truth, the instructions I derived from them.

But after my death—or, rather, after I left the earth—I commenced a course of review on all the matters which I taught as true, and when my spirit, divested of its grosser covering, became itself a personal actor in many of the scenes which I had attempted to describe, I learned how easy it had been for me to give an incorrect coloring and shape to the great doctrines which I had supposed I had taught correctly.

I have made these remarks in order to explain what follows.

Living, as I said, with the sole and only motive, to ele-

vate my nature, and to aid mankind in their race toward eternity, I had no fear of death. I had lived to impart to the world the realities which were unfolded to my mortal vision of the various conditions and states of the world I now inhabit. I had lived pure and unspotted, and when I left the world I was ushered into what has been stated as the sixth sphere.

But in the course of the great revolution which took place in my opinions on many subjects, it became necessary that I should visit many of the departments of spirit-life, and thus, and by conversation with and accounts given me by other spirits, I have become acquainted with many of the facts which I now inculcate.

Let it be understood, then, first, that this is a world occupied by spirits, or, rather, men, women, and children, mingling as their desires, tastes, inclinations or pleasures impel them, accomplishing and carrying out the great objects of their formation, the development of the spirit itself to that exact state when and where it will manifest the properties and attributes so corresponding to those of the Great First Cause, that they can live and exist eternally in direct communication and connection with all that possibly can be known or realized as God; and, second, that the different spheres are localities assigned to the progressed spirits, and they represent a state of elevation, and are reached only by a still more sublimated and refined materiality and advance of knowledge and goodness of the soul than belonged to the bodies or spirits occupying the sphere below.

Now when I arrived at the sixth sphere, I found myself surrounded by spirits whom I had known on earth, and was immediately made a member of a community, composed, for the most part, of spirits of relatives or friends with whom I was connected in life. The newness of every thing impressed me with delight. The air was pure, and the whole heavens were bright and clear beyond all comparison. I saw no difference in the sky, except its brightness and purity; and on looking abroad on the earth, I

could detect no difference in its appearance from our earth, except in the heavenly beauty and harmony in the arrangement of the landscape. The diversified character of the scenery, the mountains, not ragged and steep as on earth, but rounded with every regard to the harmony and beauty of all the other scenery. The trees, the rocks and mountains, the flowers and birds, the gushing torrents and the murmuring rivulets, the oceans and rivers, man, woman, and child, all passed before me, so far excelling every thing I had conceived or imagined in the beauty of form, in the glorious demonstrations of their nature, in the palpable and evident exhibition that they were beings who inhabited an earth near to the gates of heaven, that my spirit, lifted beyond itself, sprung forth in one spontaneous gush of love and praise, and I blessed God who had vouchsafed to me the privilege I then enjoyed.

We occupy earth—tangible, positive earth—as much as your earth; but the advanced state of both spirit and locality renders it unnecessary for us to labor much to obtain food for the support of our bodies. Then, again, the earth brings forth spontaneously most of the food required for our bodies. And I would say, the advanced spirits do not require as much food as those who are below them. Their bodies, in every sphere to which they are elevated, lose a portion of their grossness, and as they are more refined, they become more like the spirit itself. We have trees—real trees and flowers, and mountains and rivers, and rocks, and every thing material; but you, who have traveled into some unsettled and far-off lands, can realize the great difference there is in your own land in the various manifestations of nature. You can behold mountains on mountains piled to heaven, and at their feet vast plains spread out, where not one blade of grass, not one green twig gives evidence that it is fit for the habitation of man. You can go farther, and behold the rugged and barren places which have been conquered by man's indomitable efforts. The dark forest which for ages covered the land has fallen be-

fore the determined energy and labor of man; and the somber recesses, fit habitations for the bear, the tiger, or some poisonous reptile, have been made to yield to man a tribute of labor, of effort, of *mind*. Thus when comparing this condition of things, your mind can the more readily perceive what is the state of those worlds fashioned for the residence of spirits, whose minds, filled with knowledge, and incited only by the strong feelings of love and adoration to God, are placed there to live, to inhabit that earth, and to form just such connections and associations as the same spirit did on earth.

In reviewing what I have written, and taking the many statements I have made contradicting the revelations of other spirits, the whole object of man's creation must be considered. What is creation in its whole but the gradual progress from the lowest form to the full development of man himself?

To suppose that this earth is, of all the works of God, alone the place selected for the residence of spirit in the flesh, is to deny the evidence which daily passes before your own senses, as well as the truths elicited by actual research. Now, reasoning from what data you possess, you must be satisfied that in your earth there are many grades of creation, both in the animal and vegetable world, and that the whole work together just, probably, as it was designed by the Great Architect of the whole.

To suppose that creation or man had gone contrary to God's intention, when first fashioned by his hand into existence, would be an absurdity, and, in fact, would deny the ability and power of the Creator to form a world and establish laws for its government which would conform to the principles on which they were based. And, again, when you look abroad on the planets moving in their orbits with no deviation, and the sun and moon answering the specific object of their creation, the earth bringing forth its treasures of gold and silver, and trees and fruit, and food for man—in fine, all the natural laws of God working to-

gether, without one deviation or departure from the precise purpose for which he created and established them—would it not be strange that he should have so signally failed in accomplishing his purposes in regard to man? Is it not surpassing strange that when the maturity (or age) of creation can not be ascertained from any development of present effects, and that only an atom or speck of all his works can be understood from actual observation, and that, too, creation in all its vastness is as much beyond the research of man as is a visit to the sun, that man can decide as to the events and results of God's laws in relation to the whole?

When so little is understood of your earth, can it be possible that that of which you know nothing—the soul of man—can be limited and confined, its destiny determined, and its condition and action circumscribed by your ignorance of laws of which you know as little as you do about God himself? No! the limitations assigned both to matter and spirit, by sect or denomination, are a perfect absurdity. What do you know of man, and who can limit the action of his mind? Who can control the innate promptings of the spirit, and circumscribe to given laws the impulse of that principle which is a part of that Great First Cause which fashioned from chaos the whole vast universe? Can it be done by a doctrine—a theory? But I can not dwell on this part of the subject longer.

I remarked that all my question had been answered, except as to the place or locality, and as to that I was conscious how difficult, if not impossible, it was to make a statement which I could comprehend. I would not, therefore, press that part, unless he wished to teach upon it.

He wrote :

No. I am glad your mind, Judge, recognizes the difficulty of understanding locality in this connection. I might say Mars, or Jupiter, or Venus; but your mind would tire were I to lead it where spirits of the sixth sphere dwell. I can not locate it. Suffice it to say, far beyond the confines or limits of any star or planet of which you have knowledge.

I then inquired, Those whom you describe as so material or gross, are they detained near the earth, and so nearer and nearer, in proportion to their grossness, so that they wander darkling around their old haunts?

And it was answered:

That is a comparative term—"near the earth." They visit the earth frequently, and their tasks and habits correspond with what they used to be when on earth. To compute the distance would be beyond my ability.

Is progression and purity the all-engrossing topic of thought with them?

No.

Your duties being so much on earth, and your connection with earth being so intimate, is not your happiness much impaired by our sufferings, or the thousand-and-one considerations which cause us unhappiness here?

Yes.

In your government, do your little communities band together and form larger ones, over which, also, there are governors, and so on, like system upon system of worlds? The answer was:

Circle within circle, winding spirally upward, until it centers in one ruler over all.

If the spirit-body is a new one entirely, and of new materials, in no respect emanating from the old, how is it a "sublimation" of the old? Just carry out the consequences of this idea.

When you reflect that matter is the same, existing through all time, your question is answered.

Are there spirits in a state of existence above yours, just as invisible and inaudible to you as you are to us?

Yes. How shall I find words to explain this seeming mystery? But I will ask my friend Bacon to answer that question when you two are together, and I wish you would propose it at the earliest opportunity.

Section Sixteen.

Monday, May 9th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, I read over to Dr. Dexter the minutes of last evening's interview, and it was written :

THERE is no state of existence, Judge, but has its better spirits above it. There is no mind so advanced and enlightened but there is a mind more developed, more progressed, to which the other will look, with deference and respect. If this obtains on earth, how much more should this law exert its full influence among spirits! It is a singular fact, in the progress of all things on earth, that the most inferior plant can, by cultivation, be made to manifest properties entirely distinct from the original, yet retain all the characteristic features of the germ. Now you take a peach, and in its original form it is almost worthless, yet by cultivation you develop the fruit to that degree of perfection that of all fruits of the earth it is most sought for and admired. These simple facts are pertinent illustrations of the great law which had its beginning with God, and will end only when the Creator is unable to execute the laws he has established.

Thus all progressed spirits have above them other spirits, who have passed through the death of the spheres, and therefore have become so much more ethereal and refined, that those in the sphere below necessarily can not see them. And though I pretend to a certain degree of advancement, yet there are conditions above my sphere where reside spirits whose bodies I can not behold, only when my mind, like your own, is in such a state that they act upon it, as certain spirits did on yours, by visions and imagery.

Your learned men ascribe the nucleus of all worlds to what they call gaseous bodies, or nuclei. Supposing this to be true, through what processes of growth and development they must have passed to have arrived at that stage or state where they have become fit habitations for men!

All species of the apple, it is said, are derived from the simple crab apple. And what variety, without number, you find in size, shape, coloring, taste, and flavor! Now, this is eminently true with regard to man; and though I can not say he was derived from one source or one being, yet your knowledge of the various races, species, genera, and orders must satisfy you that in every age of the world some new property has been developed in him, and this in proportion to his situation and connection, until, at the present day, the race of men now moving and controlling the affairs of life have further advanced, and manifest more of the true characteristics of his proper nature, than all classes or nations who have preceded it.

There is a necessity for an advance toward perfection in every thing created by God. Of what purpose was it that he created worlds, and filled them with intelligent beings, capable of understanding and learning from every manifestation of his power around them the effects which certain laws he has established have produced? Of what purpose was it that he should have created them, if he had intended that they—man or men—should have remained in a state of abeyance? Of what use the mind? Of what use thought? Of what use that the sprig should have been lopped off from the oak itself?

God could just as well have created man without a soul as with an intelligent one; and certainly it appears to me reasonable that in planting within his body a spirit susceptible, comprehensive, and intelligent, he intended that spirit should not be satisfied with learning or understanding one fact only, and that it should not be satisfied till it had grasped every thing within the scope of its faculties. There is one idea which has often occurred to me since I left the

earth, and that is, that if it were not intended that both spirit and matter should progress, God would probably have created man with all the powers and faculties of his nature, ready developed at his creation. For were it denied that the intention of his creation was his steady advancement, the mind, when it had mastered one position, would have still remained the same as before it recognized a new idea. There could not have been any appreciation of any thing before it, and instead of knowledge enlarging its range of desire and thought, it would have left it in the same condition as it found it. What think you? On this great principle is based, as before stated, all the law and the spirits.

Now about ourselves. And though I talk to you, my friend, I want you to understand that I include the Doctor, in every thing I say. Writing through him as a medium, I sometimes do not realize that he is present; but enough of that, too.

I feel that your thoughts have been occupied in digesting the great truths taught last night by Sweedenborg. I am writing through the hand of Dr. Dexter; and to many persons, looking on and beholding the use of the same expressions as you adopt on earth, they would remark on its foolishness and absurdity as a spirit-manifestation. But look at the ideas we inculcate, regard the thoughts we express. And if in the whole history of written human thought there is any thing that can approach it, either in the magnitude of the ideas or the profundity of the thoughts, then I am heartily willing it should be said to be a farce.

But when man, as have you, my friend, shall have looked into nature with eyes that do not blink at the dazzling gems she holds up before them; when man, like you, has from his inmost heart yearned for some rational explanation of the longing desire to understand your own immortality; and when from the dark abyss beyond this life he shall have presented to his understanding the radiance, the glory, the unsurpassing loveliness of truth, and is willing

to receive and adopt it, then shall old things indeed pass away, then shall shallow doubts give way to confirmation strong as the eternal principles of his own nature, and in the ecstatic joy of a developed mind he will find, as you have found, how great the joy of believing. BACON.

I remarked, that I was yesterday reading some of his essays written when in life, and I came across some which denounced the love between the sexes; which said that no man could be great who had such love, and that great things had been done only by those men who had no wife or children. Now, I wanted to know if he entertained the same sentiments now?

He wrote in answer;

Oh! how little I understood the true character of the heart's affection! What a confined idea I had of the soul's capacity! But I am sure there is no man, no matter what his abilities—no matter how great the power of his mind—who can arrive at any eminence in the world you inhabit, excepting his heart is filled with love to all and every thing created by God, and who is not capable of appreciating affection's response in every human heart.

The law of God's creation in all its workings is love; and had it not been for your affection, your devoted love, you would have burrowed in the mire of your own natural desires, and never have arrived at the position you occupy.

Don't refer me to my earthly absurdities.

I remarked, that there was another question I wished to ask: It was evident that he was a progressed spirit, and from all the teachings it appeared that he could roam at pleasure amid scenes where all was joy and happiness. Yet it seemed that much of the time he was near me, and of course on this earth, and affected by its sorrows and sufferings. Now what I wanted to know was, what good it did him to be near this earth? He answered in these words:

Judge Edmonds, that I am with you much, I have before told you. That I strive to impress your thoughts; I have before said. Why I am with you, I have partially stated. I am as much interested in the advancement of your race, both on earth and in the spirit-land, as you are and have been in

ameliorating the condition of one class of your unfortunate fellow-creatures. I am not exclusively reading your mind all the time I am with you; and being with you, is a comparative expression. To wish to be with you, is to be there. To wish to be thousands of miles away, is to be there immediately the wish is formed. While with you, I sometimes converse with spirits who accompany me, and who have, under my direction, charge of certain duties. At times, even in your library, I teach the high destinies of their nature to certain unprogressed spirits, whom I persuade to attend me there. At other times I read and reflect, at others witnessing the working of your mind.

Then, again, I listen to your conversation with your friends or visitors; but the advanced spirits never witness any act of man which is improper to be noticed by any other person, that is, any necessary or proper act of life. When you suffer, we try to assuage. When you are tired, we study to suggest a remedy; and when you are ill, we call around you those in whom you have confidence, and they endeavor to relieve you by controlling your nervous system.

The great object of progression is not confined to a locality or sphere, to a neighborhood or person. You are as much interested as we are; and when an idea is generated on earth which advances your material or spiritual condition in the least, we feel the influence of that progressive step, and are attracted to the source from whence it emanates, and endeavor to make you feel the full effect of that influence, as we know you ought to appreciate it. I think your question is answered..

I said, No, not entirely, and I was apprehensive that I had not worded it so as to convey the precise idea I intended. My object had been, not to inquire so much whether it afforded him pleasure, as it was to ascertain what good it did him, or what advantage it was to him thus to be near the earth. Thus, it had been said that my wife's progression had been advanced by her dealings with me, so what I wanted to know was, whether his progression was in like manner advanced by his connection with earth?

In brief, yes. Every act that man or spirit accomplishes for good, is just so far a step forward in the development of his nature. Your wife, in accomplishing what she has done, found her reward in the increased flow of all those affections which contribute to the elevation of her character.

Besides, in directing your mind to the anxious inquiry after the truth of spirit-intercourse, she developed traits in your mind which had slumbered there since first it was exercised by thought; and as this was generating an idea for good, she, as the instrument, felt the revivifying effect of that act. No man does a good act but his nature is bettered; and it is the property of goodness that it never loses any thing by cultivation. It was a reciprocal effect. She has had her reward. I, too, shall have my reward; but my labors are not yet done. BACON.

Section Seventeen.

Tuesday, May 10th, 1853.

This evening Dr. Dexter and Mr. Sterling, of Cleveland, Ohio, were in my library.

Mr. Sterling made some remarks about the difficulties he encountered in communing, and about the different languages used by the spirits in conversing with mortals, and about their conversing with each other without using spoken language.

I remarked, that I supposed that in proportion as they were developed and advanced, the less need they had of spoken language, and the nearer the earth they were, the more they had occasion to use it.

After some such conversation it was written:

THE opportunity presented to certain individuals to witness the more advanced revelations of spirits, is for the

language of the

accomplishment of the object which we have so earnestly at heart, that of spreading and disseminating the doctrines taught by them. It is indeed a privilege, scarcely to be estimated rightly by those to whom these manifestations are given. One fact I ought to specify, that we do not always select the proper person to whom we have imparted the truths we desire to teach. Thus, when we have often thought we have found the person who would aid us in our efforts properly and wisely, we have learned, after a while, that he was wanting in certain characteristics, which retarded our exertions and rendered our revelations so unsatisfactory, that they really seemed to be entirely different from what they were intended.

Then, again, the circles are not always harmonious, and the subjects proposed are so much below the teachings we wish to utter, that it interferes with our ability and power to manifest the true desires of our heart. In communicating to circles or individuals by words or written language, it must be understood that the ideas which are usually adopted as correct, are so only in part. Thus spirits who rarely visit the earth (progressed spirits) do not always converse with one another by words—their intercourse is by affinity. But those whose duties and inclinations lead them to earth, must of necessity possess the requisite qualifications which will afford an easy and certain manner of being understood. How could a spirit be understood if he had no medium of expressing thought? If he impresses mind, he must shape the thought he creates in a proper form, so that the idea can be communicated properly and be understood. Spirits, therefore, write the different languages of the various countries where they may be attracted, and can thus manifest their thoughts and the great truths of spirit-progression in a language understood by those whom they address. We use the same means you would avail yourselves of, if you were placed in a situation where it became important to learn a language of another country. The spirits of the higher spheres have

scarcely need of language, and the idea of the Judge is quite correct, that the nearer the earth they are, the more they are obliged to express their thoughts orally or otherwise.

Now be quiet and silent, while I say a word or two to Mr. Sterling, as he is anxious to learn something, of the manner in which he should proceed in regard to the subjects of investigation.

There should be no desultory matters introduced into a circle which has not been organized for a long time, and in which the members are not so harmonious as to render it unnecessary that the connection should be constantly kept up. As I remarked to the Judge at the earlier part of these teachings, you can correctly ascertain the true character of the spirit purporting to teach, by the subject-matter of his teachings, as well as by the peculiar method by which he communicates his ideas. No spirit of the higher spheres can utter thoughts below the position he occupies. This is an important statement, and should be remembered, as from this evidence you can, sooner or later, detect any attempt at imposition by inferior or mischievous spirits.

I suggested to you the other evening, that the medium through whom the manifestations are made, should be selected with proper regard to his ability and power of mind, and also with reference to his organization of body, his education, habits, associations, and the society in which he lives. When, therefore, you have obtained such an one as I have described, select those persons to compose the circle who strongly desire to obtain knowledge as well as facts, and who are willing to wait and watch until the suitable moment shall have arrived to ask the proper questions on any part of the subject which they do not understand. Be not fickle, and let not too many minor questions be proposed on topics of no great consequence, and which, when answered, would not satisfy the ulterior demands of this great subject. But earnestly, and, above

all, patiently, go on, vigorously prosecuting your inquiries on the one subject under teaching. Many circles fail of eliciting great thoughts, or even any truth, from the fact that there is a frivolity of conduct, a certain carelessness of manner, and want of that due consideration of the importance of the researches for which they are sitting and inquiring.

Of course, I know nothing about the peculiar circumstances of your failures or success in prosecuting your researches, and neither do I know any thing of the true character of the person of whom you spoke, except from the impression of it I find in your mind. From that, I should judge that she had not yet appreciated the true nature of spirit-revelations, and she requires to be taught the primary lessons on this matter. Bring her mind to estimate rightly what the true intent of spirit-communion is, and lead her to seek from the beginning the gem which is hidden from her mind under such a mass of contradiction and seeming obscurity. Then she will go with you heart and soul, and, perhaps, as is woman's nature, leave you far behind in her rapid progress through the mysteries of spirituality.

As for yourself, I can only say, your own good judgment should be exercised on all subjects presented to your understanding. When you converse with spirits, do not take the statement of your friends as infallibly true. They may not intend to mislead you, but, perhaps, they are not so advanced that they can truly instruct you about subjects which you are anxious to understand. Learn, too, that except for special purposes connected with this subject, we rarely say any thing about your personal affairs. We can not judge more correctly of the consequences of your acts in life than can you. As our thoughts are almost entirely absorbed in matters above and beyond the things of earth, when a spirit directs you about personal affairs, doubt, and you will always be satisfied in the end that you doubted just at the proper time. But never cavil at a circle. Nothing detracts so much from the elevated mind as the

constant apprehension that he is deceived. What may appear incredible to-night may be so clearly explained to-morrow, that you will wonder at yourself that a doubt entered your mind. Be willing to be advised by those who have received greater light than yourself; and when so advised, remember that the mind to which has been vouchsafed the higher teachings of the spirits can not if it would, press on you considerations which it has received for the mere purpose of gratifying vanity. Every revelation of high character leads the mind one step toward its eternal progress. And when your notions and prejudices on many subjects shall have been submitted to the searching analysis of spirit-chemistry, you will be confounded at the causes which have rendered your investigations so perplexing, and you will regard most of your past experience as of but little consequence compared with the great truths which will be opened to your comprehension.

Your mind is so unsettled, that I am afraid I have scarcely made myself intelligible.

BACON.

Mr. Sterling then left, and I asked some inconsiderable question, and received this answer :

I wish you could know the engrossing topics of my heart. When I have imbued yours and the Doctor's minds with all I have to explain, then shall I wend my way back to those glorious spheres where my soul can rise step by step toward the eternal rest in store, where the chord touched in love on your earth will vibrate in such tones of harmony through *all* the spheres, that there will resound one grand response of celestial melody that shall fill the remotest bound of creation with the inspiring theme of love, love forever and ever.

Section Eighteen.

Wednesday May 11th, 1853

This evening, in my library, it was written:

I FEAR I can not well talk with you to-night, as I find my amanuensis is in an unfit state of mind to write freely. I wish the Doctor were with *me*, as I could then give him the sympathy he so much needs. After a while, perhaps, I could write more easily, but I want he should go home early, and rest both mind and body.

We then sat and conversed for one hour or more, when the Doctor's hand was moved, and the following questions were propounded, and answers given:

I said, Let us not forget that Luther and Calvin were once with us, desirous of conversing, and that we are willing and will be ready at any time to have them do so.

It was answered:

I have not seen Luther or Calvin since the night when they were here. When the proper time arrives, they will visit you, if you wish.

I then asked this question: Will spirits be instructed generally as to your arrangements and plans through us, and so be led to aid them? And how can inferior spirits be prevented from communing?

It was answered:

Spirits recognize the feelings of the mind in its reflex action. Thus, when your mind is engrossed with an important and grave subject, the effect of which would contribute to the benefit of man, they feel the influence of the thoughts; and the progressed spirits, acknowledging the principle from the affinity with their own desires, will aid you in accomplishing your purposes. Thus, then, there is no difficulty in attracting around you good spirits, if the

motives of your heart partake of a divine character. And you may be assured that no unprogressed spirit will visit a circle or individual when there is a general or individual desire to seek information of an elevated character. The unprogressed spirits can have no congeniality with high and noble desires, and therefore they leave the way clear for those whose affinities correspond.

I then asked, What is it that makes it so much easier for us to learn what is wrong than what is right?

And it was answered.

Because the mind is a mirror from which is reflected not only objects from the external world, but also the ideas which that impression has produced. Now there is a principle beyond the question you have asked which you have recognized, but do not choose to avow; and that is, that the mind must have first admitted the right, even if it elected to do the wrong. It is not easier, therefore, to do wrong; but the right conceded, the wrong may not be easier, but more convenient for the purposes of self-interest.

No educated mind exists but what must struggle with itself when it chooses wrong rather than right. Then oftentimes the image reflected is distorted, crooked, and the action is consequently irregular. But your mind has answered the question already. Circumstances control the acts of man far beyond the belief of a majority of philosophers.* Somewheres you said-to-be-inspired writers say,

* When this had been said to us, I illustrated it to the Doctor by telling him an incident which had occurred while I was one of the Inspectors of the State Prison, and which had struck me with great force, and I thought it would not be amiss to insert it in our book as an exposition of the teachings

Through the Doctor's hand it was written:

"I am overwhelmed with the question. Insert it by all means."

The incident was this:

I was endeavoring to introduce into our penitentiaries a reform in the mode of government. The system had been for many years one of force and fear only, and it had grown to be horribly cruel and harsh; so much so, that in the prison with which I was connected more than 3,000 blows with the whip had been inflicted a month. There was no appeal to kindness, none to the reason, but the prisoners were kept in subjection only by the whip.

“When I would do good, evil is present with me.” Now

My effort was to introduce, instead, the law of kindness, and appeal rather to the reason than the fear of the convicts.

This necessarily involved a great deal of personal intercourse with them, and I tried to set an example of that to the subordinate officers of the prison. Among the persons with whom I was thus brought into contact was a man about forty-five years of age, whose early history I inquired into.

When he was about five or six years old his widowed mother, who resided in one of our largest cities, had married a second husband, who was harsh and unfeeling toward her children, and had actually turned this little fellow out of doors. In the daytime he had wandered about the streets, begging his food, and at night, having no place to sleep in, he strayed back near his mother's residence, and slept in boxes and on the stoop of her house, etc. The watchmen had found him there several nights, and taken him to the watch-house, until finally he was committed to the poor-house.

Here he had lived among pauper children, in an institution not very well regulated, according to his account, until he was old enough to be bound out as an apprentice. He had had a hard-hearted, unfeeling master, and in a few years run away from him. Then for some years he wandered about the wharves of a large sea-port, gaining a precarious livelihood by occasional labor, and herding with the depraved and the ignorant. He went to sea, and tiring of that, returned to his old life along the wharves, and thus spent a number of years between “ship and shore.” He varied the scene at times by being sent to prison, and had spent a good deal of time in various prisons, as well in those designed for punishment as in those for detention, and finally brought up in the Sing-Sing Prison, where he had been several years when my attention was directed to him. I conversed a good deal with him, in order to find out the modes of government of the prisons where he had been, and the effect upon him, to ascertain what his early training had been, and how he had been led on to the state of degradation in which I found him. His natural powers of mind were considerable, and from our frequent intercourse he became quite familiar with me, and would speak to me almost every time I came near him. I found that his thoughts dwelt almost entirely upon his animal comforts. I endeavored to give them a different direction, and elevate them to something higher. But it was difficult, for he could not read, and the rules of the prison forbade his conversing with any one but his overseer and the superintendent of his work.

One day as I passed him, he accosted me, and entertained me with a long and animated account of his personal discomforts. Vexed at the little progress my teachings had made with him, I somewhat impatiently said to him, “Ever harping on your animal wants! Why can't you have better thoughts?” “Better thoughts!” was his answer, “where shall I get them?”

And when I reflected that, with all of us, our thoughts are more occupied with the past and the future than with the present, I was struck with the question as one teaching me a lesson of great wisdom.

this is a fair admission of the proposition stated above ; the good is there, but the evil is consequent on the thousand contingencies which beset man on every side. Were man to believe that the spirits of his friends may witness his thoughts and acts for good or evil, he never would give loose to those feelings which, dependent on his selfish desires, control so much of his action.

I remarked, that I had some more questions, but did not know about asking them.

It was written :

Be brief. Yes, yes—ask, and it shall be given you.

I then asked this question, How came Luther and Calvin here on that occasion ? What was it brought them here ?

It was answered :

The general effect of the tone of your minds. I wish I could impress the fact on your comprehension, that when the feelings of your heart are of a lofty aspiration for good, for truth, it draws around you spirits whose mission is on earth, and yet the influence of your mind is felt in the spheres ; for the principle of truth, of knowledge, of good, binds this whole creation in chains stronger than brass, and the great link of communication carries the current of your feelings to every mind which assimilates in the sentiment with your own, and your acts, your desires, are recognized and admitted by the spirits occupying them.

I then inquired, Can we ever be so advanced as to be able to see you. I mean ever while in the flesh ? I make my question personal to the Doctor and myself, merely to give it point, but my inquiry is intended to relate to all mankind, for what is true of us must be true of others.

It was answered :

When I say I can read your mind, I mean just what I have intended to say in what was written a moment ago ; therefore to pretend I can read your heart would be to assume powers I do not, can not, possess. But believing that you are a true man, earnestly seeking to unveil from the grave's dark abyss the glorious scenes which lie far beyond,

I converse with you, teach you, feel with and of you, and am desirous to answer the questions you propose. Thus, then, I answer yes, when there shall be a desire existing in your mind, unminged, unalloyed with self; when you can stretch your vision back over the acts of your life, and forward to the future, and, comparing that future with the past, shall have felt your whole nature moved with the uncontrollable wish to divest yourself of every selfish feeling; when you shall plan and execute how, and when, and where to do good for the sake of the principle, then will your nature become so purified, so elevated, that the daily and hourly communion with spirits will take place at your simplest wish. But even with all your faults, there are means now being tried to manifest ourselves personally to you, that you may have assurance made doubly sure. I want to ask you if you act daily on the suggestions made in these teachings? Do you exert yourself to soothe any anxious heart? are you willing to work as well as wish? Not in reference to this cause alone, but for humanity in the effect; but as you understand me I will not write the rest.

I then asked this question: Pray tell me what it is that prompts me to make these inquiries? Is it my own mind or the action of some one else on it?

It was answered:

The strong desire to understand yourself, and all that pertains to this subject.

I here remarked, that I should have to defer our meetings for one or two evenings, as I was behind in my official business, and must devote more time to it.

It was written:

Certainly. Never neglect earthly duty, for there is time for me and you and the Doctor. Well, much as it will pain me to defer these teachings, now that the Doctor's mind is really zealous and earnest, still I will not, should not, tax your strength or interfere with your official duties. I am not always conscious of your work before you. This is my excuse.

Section Nineteen.

Thursday, May 12th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, all the circle being present, it was written :

WITH us, as with you, there are certain inducements offered us gratuitously by other minds, and certain attractions of like feeling and sentiment, that unconsciously draw us to certain localities, where we derive a pleasure and satisfaction that it is almost impossible to describe.

Attracted here as I am, and have been for a long time, in the heart's expression corresponding to the same feeling in my own mind, I look forward to the time when I shall meet you with a sort of impatience, as I feel that the ideas taught by me and received by you will not be buried in your brains, but will be disseminated at the proper time, so that the good they are designed to accomplish will sooner or later take place.

Therefore do I to-night greet you, my friends, once again in the name of that Being whose principles I am to inculcate, and whose attributes it is my peculiar province to describe.

SWEEDENBORG.

The daily habits of spirits have been but little understood, and the attempts heretofore made to give you a correct idea of the every-day life in the spheres seem to me to fail entirely, as what has been taught you affords no consistent idea of their daily occupations, their mode of life, their form of government, in fine, the history of spirits in the several spheres.

I will now briefly tell you how they live, how they act, and how they pass from one sphere to another.

I want your undivided attention.

Learned men who have written about life and death, have in vain labored to describe the act of dying. And those of you who have witnessed a death-bed have often observed the singular expressions made by the sick person, which faintly shadow, as it were, the indistinct glimpses of that land of which he is soon to become an inhabitant.

What the last sensations of the dying may be, perhaps it will ever be impossible to know; but that, when the spirit has half-way shuffled off its mortal covering, and the last sparkle of life-connection flickers and flashes fitfully amid the wreck of the body of which it is a proper part, the mind seems to acquire, even in death, a new property—that of observing the many circumstances which are taking place in the world to which the spirit goes—and I believe that this new property gives it the power of assisting the spirit to see the forms of friends, and the light which always surrounds a good spirit; and, I am confident, facts bear me out in this assertion. When, then, one is dying, his spirit passing out of the old body as out of a shell, often indistinctly beholds the forms of men and women around it. It sometimes, too, beholds the shadowy outline of some parts of the second sphere, and thus the expressions which we often hear may readily be accounted for. The last idea, or tangible sensation to the dying—I mean to the dying who retains his senses—is, perhaps, anguish at parting from friends, and a sort of strange expectancy at what he is to witness after death. I am inclined to agree with an idea often advanced by one of you, that, for the most part, the dying lose all fear of death. The near approach of the spirit to the borders of that sphere into which it is about entering, acts upon the mortal dread of death as a soother and quieter of its previous apprehensions. It is a sort of an amalgamation of feeling, a kind of mingling of spirit-land with earth, and it tranquilizes the soul in its last conflict with this state of its bodily organization.

With its feelings calmed, and its thoughts dwelling on friends and kindred, this mingling together of the two in-

fluences attracts a portion of its last sensations of thought to the spirit-land, and while it is struggling with itself, and the anguish it feels, there comes the aid of spirit-friends, and the charmed influence of spirit-land, and the last sensations recognized by its brain may be the mingling or admixture spoken of.

The heart has ceased to beat, the heaving breast has settled into an everlasting quiet, the soul has bounded one step forward in its immortal race, and stands on the confines of eternity.

Unconscious it remains, benumbed as it were by the terrible struggle it has accomplished—the first and last struggle where there is pain—until it wakes up from its dream, and recognizes the forms of friends long since dead, and a new land, the beauty of which dazzles its untried senses.

The spirit does not lay in its spirit-form; but as soon as the death is over, it passes into a new organization, into a new body created from matter, but so pure in comparison to its old body, that even its beauty and refinement occupy no small portion of its first examination.

And here it may be argued, that the body could not be made so matured and laid by, waiting for the occupancy of the spirit, when it leaves the earth. But it may be answered, that when every thing on your earth is measured by the standard of what exists on that earth, it is no criterion by which to judge of cause and effect in the spirit-land. And again, your ideas of creation are so circumscribed by the diminutive little earth you occupy, that there is no great wonder that your conclusions should be of no great magnitude either.

Well, the soul has waked up in a new body and on a new earth. It has recognized friends and kindred, and has learned, that it has passed from death to life. Now commences the history of the life of that spirit.

After the natural curiosity of the spirit has been gratified --for under every form of organization the spirit develops its desire to learn—it is chosen, or, rather, it selects, by the

force and direction of its affinities, the associates with whom it will daily mingle, and the neighborhood in which it will reside.

Now, in the second sphere, there are many places or planets occupied by spirits, and it goes to one or the other in obedience to this law, and there remains until it is ushered into the sphere above. It finds the land or earth which it inhabits organized like your own, requiring labor to develop its resources, and that it is incumbent on it to labor for its own good as well as others. And here let me say, that, in the spheres, labor is substantially the first fealty demanded in any community of any person who may claim to be a member. It is the great characteristic of the spirit-land, and is recognized as of God. 10302

In the second sphere, the organization being less refined than in the spheres above, the new spirit often finds it necessary to shelter its body from the sun or storm; not because it gives it pain, or that it would induce sickness or disease to expose its body to all the variations of temperature, but that its pleasures are enhanced by its compliance with all the laws of nature; and to expose the body to cold or wet, with its organization not entirely freed from all admixture of earth, would diminish the real pleasure it would receive from shelter or protection. Consequently, it erects its habitations, and clothes its body, and looks out for the means of sustaining its strength, or, rather, of providing for its appetite. Learn, also, that the laws of nature, in their application to the material body of the spirit, are so properly appreciated by the spirit, that while a violation would not produce disease or pain, yet the spirit who neglects or refuses compliance is degraded, as a punishment for such infraction of what it knows to be right. And this is not inflicted by any tribunal, but takes place as a natural consequent; the spirit sinks lower and lower, till its density bears it to the places below the earth. ✓

I had better close for to-night, for reasons obvious to all. Good-night. ✓

Section Twenty

Saturday, May 14th, 1853.

This evening, when Dr. Dexter called on me, I told him that in reading over the minutes of our last evening's meeting a question had occurred to me, and I read it to him in these words: You say, "spirit being of the same origin and of the same ultimate destiny," etc. Do you mean all spirits by this? Or is there a separate class of angels, or spirits, created as such, and not originally subject to the law of human progress? Or is the first sphere of human existence (meaning all human existence throughout the whole universe) the great storehouse from which alone the higher and highest conditions of spiritual existence are peopled?

After some half hour or more's conversation on this and other topics, his hand was moved, and this answer to that question was written:

How insignificant is man! How contracted the circle in which he moves! Surrounded on all sides by obstacles which his genius, not his strength, overcomes, he can not compare in his physical powers with the horse which he has tamed to his hand. He views the firmament spread out before him, studded with a thousand worlds, but, confined to earth, he stretches forth his hands in vain to reach them, and explores them only by and through his mind. He sends his ships to the farthest verge of his own globe, and yet he is scarcely able to move by his own strength the weight of his own body.

And yet, though man be so insignificant in the organization of his body, how powerful the workings of his wondrous mind! He measures the distance of the remotest star, and marks the wanderings of the most eccentric comet, calculating its return with the prescience of a God. He plunges amid the profundity of worlds, and out of the confusion of their own order he arranges system after system,

and makes them, as it were, obedient to the calculations he has established for their arrangement.

Confined to earth in his body, he penetrates its dark interior, and brings out to view the precious treasures hidden there. He approximates to the God who created him, for he commands all other created beings, and they obey the dictates of his will. In his care and foresight he provides against the contingencies of time, and lays up against the slow but sure passage of years, the support of the weak and the poor, as well as the rich and powerful. In his affections, he manifests a correspondence with the attributes of his Creator; for though in his artificial relations his selfishness is manifest and distinct, yet in the relation to the great whole of his kind, he has founded laws which protect the rights of every one claiming kindred with himself.

In his justice, he has reduced the biases of his own nature; and in the stern administration of the laws, he has made every one alike.

In his charities, he has provided for the poor and necessitous, and has made each one, according to his ability, contribute for the support of his brother.

In his tastes and fancies, he has made the dark and the hideous, the misshapen and distorted, yield to the godlike power of his innate sense of beauty, and avows his divine origin by his love for all the works of his God.

How wonderful is man, who has played with the lightning and the storm, and has toyed with them as a froward child!

Contemplating his works, we ask is this man, who, from the rough and misshapen world around him, has created objects of so much strength and beauty? What was man when the earth was covered over all its surface either with dark forests, or barren plains, or inaccessible mountains, or arid and parched-up deserts? Who has fashioned out of the unfinished world such glorious harmony, such wonderful consequences? Man—the weak—the insignificant!

And how is this? By what means has he leveled mountains, and filled up valleys, prostrated forests, and o'er the barren desert stretched forth his fruitful hand, and raised up such magical wonders by the mere force of his will? By the law of his nature, which has fashioned him as he is, and has made him the co-worker of his Creator.

Ask you, then, if there are angels created distinct from man? Ask yourself if an angel has transmitted, from age to age, the impress of his mind, and has made the hearts of man, thousands of years following him, burn with the eloquence of his mighty thoughts! Could God create two distinct classes of beings out of himself, and give to one the precedence over the other? If from his own nature he has created man, how, from that same nature, could he have fashioned another race of beings distinct from man?

Ask yourself these questions, and answer when you may.

BACON.

After we had read over, and reflected, and conversed on the foregoing for a while, it was further written:

What are considered by you as angels, are but the beatified spirits of men, in whom the progress of their nature has developed all that there is of beauty and perfection of form.

They are, as I am led to believe, the spirits of men whose organization has passed the seventh and last process of refinement, and are constantly in intercourse with all that can be known of God. No human mind, fertile in imagination as it is, can picture to its wildest fancy the overpowering and transcendent beauty of the progressed and elevated soul. The world's images of thought fail to convey the faintest idea of my meaning, and I shall, therefore, leave the description to the evidence of your own senses.

In communicating so many thoughts and new ideas as I have done, I have thought if it would not be well if you were to penetrate the deep metaphysical nature of many of

my observations, and ask questions concerning the abstract meaning of my statements.

There is, after all, a deep and innate feeling in man's nature of what is called superstition, but what I consider the only evidence we have that man's spirit recognizes the source from whence it emanated, and recollected, perhaps, something which impressed its consciousness before it was sent into this world.

Therefore, when you give your book to the world, will it not elicit the right sort of inquiry, if the deeper meaning of the revelations is probed, and the true intent and purpose made manifest? I trust you will ask all questions which are suggested to your mind, without reference to the magnitude of the object comprehended in their statement.*

The Doctor asked me if I had ever entertained the thought that the soul brought into its connection with matter, in constituting man, any ideas which it had derived from its previous existence?

I answered, Yes. I had imbibed such a notion from some of the earlier spiritual teachings which I had received, and that the fact, of which all of us were at some time or other conscious, that things which we knew had never happened to us before, were yet as familiar as if they had, was the relic of some such prior existence. I had subsequently been taught that in this I had been in an error, but the general idea, that the soul did retain some consciousness derived from such prior existence, still existed in my mind.

Then it was written :

I may, perhaps, give you a clearer idea of my meaning. When I say meaning, I intend to say what are my convictions from what I have witnessed, and from what I know.

After the separation of the spirit from the parent source, it, perhaps, receives no idea of any kind until it is incorporated with matter. But before this separation, it must have been impressed with thoughts far beyond any it receives

* This last remark was evidently called out by one which I had made in the course of the evening, in which I had expressed my unwillingness to ask any question that was not manifestly commensurate with the magnitude of the subject, and the elevated character of those who were teaching us.

while connected with man's body, or even after death, and in its progress through the spheres.

I am inclined to believe this, as from my own feelings even now, and from what I daily observe of man's mind. This feeling of superstition, or of spirit-recollection, is connected with an overweening one, in which the power, the might, and the omniscience of God is specially distinguished. It is as if the soul was conscious that at some time it had been impressed with thoughts too mighty to conceive; and the terror which so often assails the strongest mind is mixed with a seeming knowledge of what that power was, at the thought of which the soul shrank powerless, and that the spirit knew it from a sort of participation or connection with the origin of all power and might.

I shall close here, and hope that after a little conversation you will both retire, as I intend, next week, to push you as hard as you can well permit. Good-night.

BACON.

Section Twenty-one.

Sunday, May 15th, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's, and before any communication began, I remarked to the Doctor that, as Lord Bacon had suggested, I had been preparing questions arising from his teachings, and among others I had asked: Why the change of heart which the religionists spoke of was not just as much evidence of the truth of their belief, as the change Lord Bacon had spoken of was evidence of the truth of these teachings?

And remarking, also, upon the extraordinary character of these revelations, I said, That not more than one out of a thousand, even of the believers in spiritualism, would credit them.

The Doctor asked me if I had my questions ready as to Swedenborg's last teachings?

I replied, No; only one or two inconsiderable ones, and I would postpone them until our next meeting.

It was then written :

It is well ; but before I proceed to the proper subject of my lecture, it might be as well to remark on the topic of your conversation just now, the effect which this new revelation may have on the minds and faith of community ; therefore while I greet you, my friends, in the spirit of true affection and love, I suggest if I had not better do as I have proposed.

SWEEDENBORG.

We assented, and then it was written :

It is not strange that there should be believers and unbelievers on a matter the evidence of which is mostly appreciatory, and not tangible. But so it is in all the religious doctrines taught to man since the world was formed, and much of the faith exercised by mankind has been as much dependent on the will of the teacher as on the eternal truths of his teaching.

But while, on the one hand, you observe the various hues and complexions given to religious belief on precisely one idea, you can not well understand why this should be so, or why, when it is admitted that there is a God and Christ is his son, that the identity of the one should be disputed, or the existence of the other denied. You can well believe, that as only from material evidence God can be approached (in his idea of existence), you do not comprehend why all that God has directed for the government and action of man should be so variously communicated, when the fact of its being of God is supposed to be beyond all doubt.

You have referred to the change which a belief in any of the doctrines inculcated produces in the mind of man, and you ask why is the comparison of the same effect by Bacon of spirit-faith of any difference with that of any believer in any faith or doctrine? Now it is well and proper that we notice all that is the result of your thought and expression when we are present with you, as it gives

us opportunity of answering the objections of your judgment, ere the biases these objections might create should become a permanent conviction. Thus, if Christians teach you there is one God, and that he meant, in revealing his thoughts and intentions toward man, to differ in different circumstances, then you have not the mental ability to understand how God should be immutable and unchangeable, as he is represented. But, on the other hand, if you believe that the thousand opposite statements and doctrines represented as of God are but the vain or fanciful, the severe or stern emanations of man's brain, you can very well realize that a faith predicated on man's thought or understanding of what God might be, or what he might have intended to say, is of no vital consequence to man in reference to his life here on earth, or his life after death.

Now the meaning of Bacon's remark was this: that an effect produced by an arbitrary exercise of any power, whether over the body, and certainly over the mind, can not produce that change in life or action that a belief can which is left to man's judgment, after the whole facts of the case are given.

Thus, on the one hand, while there will be fanaticism and enthusiasm, there will be life or death for the advance or result of any given doctrine; and while there will be persecutions and burnings, torturing and imprisonment, to overawe the thought of man's mind, there will absolutely be a corresponding progress in his whole life and nature in keeping with the manner in which the doctrines are inculcated, and the means taken to make those doctrines prevalent.

I am satisfied, that while the world was under religious government, the thought, the progressive energy and development of every class of society, were either retrograding or positively stationary. While, on the contrary, not until man's mind, freed from all restraints of priest or church, was permitted, or, rather, did of itself recognize in the God they adored a God of progress and intelligence,

and saw the minute connection of this principle of his nature with every part of creation, did the faculties of man's mind fully appreciate their own power. I mean, not until this was absolutely granted man as a right, and he viewed it, too, as a law, could he advance one step in the race of mind. And I am glad that I have so pertinent and felicitous a comparison in the fact, that since the world has been called liberal, there have been more inventions, more contrivances, more science, more true knowledge, more positive advance and progression in one brief decade, than in hundreds of years before.

Thus, while this is so, we recur again to one part of this subject, and that is, that while the fruits of one belief are witnessed in the very fact of retrogression or stationary satisfaction, and the character of the mind assumed the complexion of the world around it, which again it has contributed to produce, the faith we teach, left to the undirected investigation of man's untrammelled thought, and the determination or choice of his judgment, produces a condition or change exactly the reverse. While it satisfies the void which no belief in any system of revealed (so said) religion has ever done, it at the same time imparts to his mind the change of just apprehension of himself, a *Говори Сеавров*, not by a comparison with any rules of any sect, but from the fact that he now comprehends that there is just as much required of him here as there is after death, and that a soul here bowed down by error, can not rise ascendingly toward the point of its ultimate and eternal home, until it shall have purged itself by its own efforts of the sin that besets it.

No marvelous dependence on the power or will of God can alter his conviction, that when he has of himself done wrong, it is by himself, and that self alone, that the wrong must be eradicated. And, therefore, that while a change of heart may be necessary, as a mere comparative term, yet no power, except the just action and operation of his own mind, can produce that change.

Many men, who have not the courage to avow a desire to investigate even, will oppose you from a fear that the interests of their church will suffer, if this strange doctrine should circulate. Other men, while they really believe that they are safe for heaven, will oppose you for the reason, that if you can obtain happiness eternal by such means, it will interfere with a certain right they have in dictating how your ultimate position should be secured. Others will deny all that is taught, because they do not know any thing about what is taught, and never will know, were they to live till the mountains tottered with old age. Many, from a firm conviction that you are wrong and desire to set you right. There is a class, too, who, fearing you may be right, will strongly oppose you from the apprehension that if, indeed, you be right, they must be eternally miserable, and thus they oppose you for fear that some spark will light up their minds and expose the darkness of error which there exists. Many will battle for the honor of Christ. Others fight for the honor of a name. A great many, and oh! how I regret to say, that there numbers in this list, a great, very great many clergymen, will ignorantly oppose you, because they can not admit that any new idea is of any good, forsooth, as if the whole range and phases of God's creation was not ever new and varied, and that every idea, however old, is always elicited from a new cause; this class will oppose you from the motive mentioned above, as well as the fear that they alone shall lose by it. Some from one thing, some from another, some from reason, some from insanity, some purely and honestly, others wickedly and perversely. But the effect will be, after all, to establish, like a sun in mid heavens, truth eternal, unchangeable, immutable, that God is alone and needs no help, that our ultimate destiny, dependent on ourselves, can not be unhappy, if we work and labor to obtain that truth.

And lastly, that spirit and matter are co-existent through eternity, and that the first evidence given to man that spirit

could communicate with him, was the evidence that God is of himself sufficient to the perfection of that which is of himself, and that he is the end and the beginning, and that man, accompanying him from the beginning, shall exist with him to the end.

Section Twenty-two.

Monday, May 16th, 1858.

This evening, in my library, Dr. Dexter and I were discussing some of these teachings. Some one had remarked, that as soon as he became satisfied these teachings were from Swedenborg he believed. The Doctor and I said that we did not assent to that proposition. We did not undervalue the source, or rather channel, through which the teachings came, but what had the most influence with us was, the teachings themselves, their clearness and precision, their candor, the profundity of thought, and the force of the reasoning. Come from what source these might, they would work conviction in our minds.

After we had closed this conversation, and I saw that the Doctor's hand was becoming affected, I asked if I should now propound the questions I had prepared?

It was written in answer:

As we have but little time to-night, I beg you will defer your questions until to-morrow night, as, too, I want to say a word on the subject you were discussing just now.

That I am pleased with the effect of our teachings it would be vanity to deny [as if spirits had any vanity!], and as the subject opens before you, there will be more of surprise and wonder that even your minds, accustomed as they are to examine carefully the whys and wherefores of every question, should have so many years remained ignorant of the eternal truths which pertain to your immortal nature.

If my wishes in regard to your questions meet your views, I will say a few words, and then bid you good-night.

BACON.

We said, Certainly; any course he might adopt would be acceptable to us.

Then it was written:

There is one aspect of our meetings which has not been, before now, considered; as I have waited and watched to analyze your minds, and to test how far I might venture to avow opinions which I knew must conflict with all your preconceived notions, as well as to test the strength of your belief in what has already been written, and also to see how far you would permit your former belief to interfere with your judgment. I allude to the calm and philosophic manner in which you receive these teachings, as well as the candid yet rigid examination to which every subject is submitted.

If I could explain all the means that are used, and the various causes which retard or facilitate the flow of my thoughts, you would comprehend how much these manifestations are changed from their original form by the condition of the minds to whom they are communicated, and you would realize that it is not an implicit faith alone that is required to enable us to teach you understandingly, but that the minds of the circle should be elevated to a condition on a level with our own. The doctrine of affinity is the great law which governs spirit-revelation, in fact, spirit-communication, and thus under this law I am enabled to communicate freely to you the higher purposes of these teachings which imports you most to know. This much, and now for my remarks.

In all our teachings you will observe that we have omitted to say any thing regarding the Christ, or the views we have of the true intent and purpose of his mission on earth, as well as his connection with the great Being who it was said was not only his father, but the Godhead made manifest in

the form of this very Christ Jesus. We have felt that the very idea of intercourse with spirits out of the form would be denied and scouted at, and that this idea alone was of itself sufficient for our purpose first to establish, and that the advance of any opinion, opposing the very basis of the faith of much of the Christian world, would, before the fact of spirit-communion being recognized, destroy all that we intended to accomplish, and would raise up such a host of opposers that there could be no chance for the proper circulation of the truth of the facts which we labored to teach.

Thus on this subject, as well as other matters of great importance, the advanced spirits have refrained from imparting their knowledge of the true mission of Christ, and were it not that I feel I can say to you what is proper should be said at this time, I should decline even now from calling your attention to the true facts of the case.

But it is well you should understand that I can only reason. Your inferences are within the control of your own thoughts, and you have received so many ideas lately which you have reasoned rightly upon, that I am confident I can venture to give you my arguments without any apprehension of their being misunderstood.

One consideration should always be borne in mind, as it must be assumed as a fact, not only as regards your world, but our world too, in fact, the whole operation of God's laws, whether pertaining to himself, or whether in reference to any department of man or matter, that God never works by miracle.

This idea received and established will satisfy you, that all the vague and incongruous theories of the power of the Creator and his manifestations are but the confused impressions of what God might do, not that which he does exhibit.

Thus, at the bottom of all religious doctrines which recognize Christ as the son and incarnation of God, there is an incomprehensible idea that some wonderful act, out of the common way, was performed by the Creator when he

impressed his own identity on a being of his own creation; that instead of a body or being, born into the world with the usual spirit-part also, God in a miraculous manner connected the whole of his universal being with the embryo, and thus was born Christ as a man in body, but in spirit the very God himself. That also out of the common course he generated a living soul; that in a miraculous manner he created out of the life-principle in the woman a being partaking of all the properties and attributes common to man.

I can not comprehend why that Being to whom is ascribed a knowledge commensurate with his very nature and pretensions, and who is considered to be a Being without change, and who, it is believed and taught, has established laws which are sufficient to accomplish all that they were designed to fulfill, should so far deviate, in a matter so completely under the control of certain laws, the effect of which has obtained, and does obtain, in the propagation of every species of man and animals as well as in vegetables, in the most minute insect as well as the most powerful animals known to man, should, I say, in a matter so well understood and so completely established in the very impulses and sentiments of our nature, deviate from the ordinary operation of those laws, and create a man in such a singular way, when it would have answered his purpose just as well to have complied with the requisites of the laws he had instituted for the effect of this very purpose. But there never was a successful system of religion without its grave mysteries, mysteries not to be understood by any but those who were the high priests of its altars.

A popular religion without its indistinct mysteries would not stand a year. No, the moral influence which guides and controls the Christian, aye! the savage world, is the dark and profound ideas of the mysterious powers granted to those who teach their doctrines, the awful powers and the dark shadowings of that Being whom they represent as unchangeable, "without shadow of turning."

It is said that God created man from the dust of the earth.

Now this is very well; but can it be conceived that when God had fashioned this world, and had instituted laws for its government, had created animals under this law, that he should so far deviate in the very commencement from those laws and create man, who ever afterward came under the full influence and workings of those rules, in an out-of-the-way manner, as if he were afraid to trust himself or the laws he had founded?

What sort of being can he be who makes laws, and commands all his beings to respect and obey them, and who has made the very instincts of their nature conform to their proper influence, and then he, the framer, the Being of all others the most likely to regard them, should, to accomplish an object just as well effected under those laws, become the first infractor, the first violator? Human intellect can not reason on this subject. It would appear so contradictory, that the good sense of man would reject the idea, were it not surrounded by the incomprehensible mystery which has been attached to it; so that man fearing to investigate, yields a blind belief, and trusts the keeping of his own judgment to the control and custody of men who play with it to suit their own purposes, and direct it as they wish or please.

Therefore I can not be mistaken in my views. You must comprehend me when I say the very *res in rem* is not tenable. It wants proof to satisfy the sterling common sense of man, and had he acted on the fair properties of his mind, and had not trusted his very judgment to the priests and churches of all sects, from a slavish fear, long, long ago this idea would have been exploded, rejected as unfit for the spirit which claims kindred with God himself.

But suppose all that has been written of the manner of Christ's birth and conception is true, suppose we admit that it was compatible with the nature of God, how shall we reconcile the object of his birth with what we know of the Creator and the very laws by which he governs man as well as all created beings?

To presume a necessity existing which made it expedient that the Creator should go round the effects of certain acts contravening the laws he had founded, and this, too, on the part of man, would, in spite of all willingness to admit the most absurd ideas, to my view, conflict with all the received notions of God as revealed in his works, or even taught by the high priests of any religion accepted by man.

How could he propose any method of evading a law? Why, the law must be presumed to be the very principle most fitted for man and his action under it, and that the proposition emanated from him to transcend the effect of this law would be virtually to say as from God himself, "If you find my laws too stringent, I will devise a way in which you can escape the true purpose for which I established them. I will set aside my own nature, and in contradiction to the universal command I have issued to you to obey them, will show you how you may violate them, and yet come under no punishment."

I ask you, is this not so? But I will write more to-morrow night. Good-night.

BACON.

Section Twenty-three.

Tuesday, May 17, 1853.

This evening, in addition to the Doctor and myself, Mr. and Mrs. S. spent the evening in my library.

I began by asking some questions touching the last evening's lecture.

My first one was this: At one time you say you "can only reason," at another you speak of "the facts of the case." Now, has it not been possible for the advanced spirits to ascertain certainly about the existence, and birth, and actual history of Jesus?

It was answered:

ALTHOUGH I mentioned "facts," yet you will observe I cited no evidence except the principles on which I suppose the laws of God were predicated. I meant that you should accept my reasonings for what they were worth, as I could not give you the true history of the birth, and life, and mission of Jesus Christ.

Yes, there are spirits who know every thing in relation to the circumstances which gave birth to Christ. They are far above my position. They occupy those glorious spheres where all that can be known of God is revealed to them. But those omnipotent truths we are not permitted to know for a certainty, till we are divested of all that is gross in our organization, and all that is of error in our minds. Certainly it is not to be told you again, that there is as much conflict of opinion on the true nature of Christ here as with you. But I am reasoning from causes which come under the full operation of the principles on which they are founded, and the effect of which is observed in every thing which emanates from God—every thing natural, every thing divine.

One great feature in all the operations of our Creator, in

all his acts, in all the laws he has instituted, is, that he never acts or manifests himself unconnected with matter. Therefore for the human mind properly to comprehend any of his attributes separate from this union would be entirely impossible. You will understand, then, why I have written on this subject as I did last night.

I next asked this question: You say that in your state of existence obedience to the law is not enforced by any tribunal, but is, as it were, instinctive with you. Is that any thing more than carrying a step or two farther the same principle which makes us in this life obey certain laws, such as those of hunger, thirst, self-preservation, etc.?

It was answered: No.

I inquired further: Is it a consequence of our progression, that our instincts also thus progress too?

It was answered:

Yes. That is the true explanation, Judge. As the mind progresses, there is a just appreciation of the laws controlling the organic part, as well as a proper idea of what are our moral obligations to ourselves and to one another. Thus when the mind perverts the one, it renders the perception of the other obtuse, and the effect is manifest in the density of the body becoming more distinct, and consequently the full and free operation of the spirit is retarded. Instead of progressing, the spirit retrogrades.

I said that I was now done with my questions, and it was written:

Well, then, if the effect of such acts on the part of God was obviously to have produced to the thinking mind such a view as I have mentioned, the idea could not have been disseminated, had it not been the policy of the leaders of the then new revelation to have awed the minds of believers, by investing the birth of Christ with a mystery so profound, that it would of itself have taken their credence by storm.

But how could Christ have taken on himself the burden of the sins of the world? When God created man (under the Mosaic account), and placed him in the garden of Eden, he fell by violating a law which the Creator had es-

independent of
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Vitality - you.

tablished. Pray, tell me now, was it possible for the spirit, not yet given off from the germ or source, to have been implicated in the sin of the first man? To become a participator in any criminal act, it is necessary one should be cognizant of the wrong done, and assent to its commission, or that one should unite with another in committing the act itself.

Now, I contend, that if God punished Adam for eating of the tree of which he had forbidden him to partake, he did so because he violated a command. This is acknowledged. Well, if it were a sin for Adam to violate a law, how much more impossible would it have been for God to have punished those who were not cognizant of the act, mentally or otherwise, or to have doomed the unborn spirit to the same punishment as he inflicted on the man Adam! Certainly, therefore, the souls of men, born long after or immediately after Adam's fall, could not have been included in the curse pronounced on him. And you will apprehend my argument, that there was no necessity for such a mediator between those who could not have been implicated in the sin and their God.

That there was and is sin in the world no one denies, but that the old or present sin originated with the act of Adam in the garden of Eden I do deny, as incompatible with every thing we know characterizing God. Pray tell me, if an act of wrong committed on your earth includes the spirits here in the consequences, how could any spirit ever arrive at the highest spheres? Now the act of Adam, according to this doctrine, implicated, involved the spirits not yet developed as distinct identities. It was an act not only shrouding the earth in gloom, but leaped over time and penetrated eternity, and laid all spirits, whether disintegrated from the parent source or those who were developed, under tribute of the same sin.

It seems to me its influence went still farther, and as God himself was and is the source of all spirit, the very Creator, the God, came under the law of punishment which

it was said he pronounced on the first man. But could it have been necessary that God should have made a savior?

When you cast your reflection back on the spiritual condition of the world at the time Christ was said to be born, you will understand all the necessity which existed. The laws, both natural and divine, were perverted, and though God was acknowledged by a few, yet almost the whole of what was called the civilized world denied his existence, and worshiped a thousand gods, of as many attributes.

The idea, as I understand it, was to establish the belief of God, not of Christ, Jesus was a reformer. By him the first true idea of what belonged to man as of himself, and to God as the Creator, was given to the world. Christ taught nothing of himself. He called for no belief that of himself he could accomplish any thing. But he taught that man was a part of God, that in his spirit existed the elements of eternal progression, and that all that was required of him was to believe in God, to love one another, and to develop the powers and faculties with which that God had gifted him.

After a short interval he added :

One word I will say in final illustration of my views of the religion Christ taught. It is, that God is love. In every situation of life this evidence is conclusive, that God loves every thing he has created. Aye! every object of his handiwork proclaims this truth, that love eternal, undying, is the source of all his works. Every man, in every condition, assents to this doctrine, and go where you will, converse with savage or civilized, you find that every faith is founded on this axiom.

BACON.

Section Twenty-four.

Thursday, May 19th, 1853.

This evening the circle met at Dr. Dexter's.

It was written :

THERE are to-night with me many spirits of your friends, who have met accidentally, but who delegate me to say that their affection surrounds you, and their love is a part of your existence, as through it you receive many impressions for good, and by it you are supported to endure many of the troubles and ills of life. Cordially, heartily, and affectionately, they with me greet you to-night. You are guarded bodily by your nearest relatives, and your spirits are the special charge of those friends who, when on earth, loved you most, and whose feelings assimilated with your own.

SWEEDENBORG.

Now your questions.

I prefaced my questions by saying that some of them were propounded in a spirit of caviling, because I was desirous of seeing how far the teachings would bear a treatment to which I knew they would, by-and-by, be subjected.

My first question was this : What do you mean by saying that " death is the first and last struggle where there is pain ? "

It was answered :

This expression refers to death alone ; and as there is no other death in the passage through the spheres, this wording is correct, as well as the idea. Death of the body is probably accompanied with pain, and when the spirit passes through the death of the spheres, it is rather a state of unconsciousness than death. This is my meaning.

I next inquired, What do you mean by the expression, the "spirit does not lay in its spirit-form?"

It was answered :

Not in the form of the body, the material body, but it assumes the body prepared for it. I rather imagine my meaning must be misunderstood. The idea I intended to convey was this : The spirit, after leaving the material body, probably assumes the exact properties and shape of the new body which it is to inhabit. Be it understood that the body of the spheres, in any condition, is a higher development than the earthly body. It approximates to the perfect man in proportion to the step it has taken. Thus the spirit, passing from the body of earth, does not retain all the features which it possessed in connection with that body, but as it passes, it acquires the size, shape, and form of the body it is to enter.

My next inquiry was worded thus : I confess I am not satisfied with the reasoning on Sunday ; for instance, the difference between our change of mind and theirs (the religionists of the day) you say is, that ours is founded on judgment, and theirs on feeling. Still, is not ours sometimes founded on feeling, and theirs on judgment ? If so, then what is the difference ?

The answer was this :

My dear sir, the gist of your question is this : How do I know that feeling does not produce the same effect as the convictions of judgment ? I can answer that, if time would permit, but I can only say that whereas feeling produces the temporary and evanescent identification with any idea, judgment or reason, convinced or satisfied, infuses into the whole action of a life the effects of that conviction. Thus, when you shall have compared the minds and conduct of the spiritualists with those of any other religionists, you will observe that the fear of death is lost, the hope of eternal progress is the very life of their existence, and that the change or impression manifest by their belief is evident in the fruits of their works. As this, too, is a matter of comparison and time, I can but ask you to wait, and then,

perhaps, you will understand the whole force of my argument. Let your mind be firmly fixed on the subject as it is.

I proceeded to my next question, in these words: You say that burnings and persecutions, etc., will follow a belief founded only on feeling, thus implying that they will not follow a belief founded on judgment. Why will this be so? for in every thing religious, political, or scientific man is ever prone to persecute the unbeliever.

It was answered:

I did not so express myself by implication, or otherwise.

I then asked: What do you mean by the remark, "there is just as much required of him here as after death," used in that connection?

It was answered:

In his progressive development man begins here, and ends where? There is, therefore, just as much required of him in proportion to the light he has in your world as in the world of spirits.

In no situation in either is more required than the light received demands. But in your world man knows God through his works, and were there no other idea of his existence, to my mind, the works are in themselves evidence enough of his attributes, to satisfy the mind of his truth, holiness, and love. Therefore it is required of him in your world that his life should conform to these principles of God's nature. No more is required of him here.

I next put this question: You say, "a certain class will never know the doctrines we teach, were they to live till the mountains totter with old age." Do you speak figuratively or literally?

It was answered:

I mean that circumstances will so operate, either by the will of man himself, or the will of others, that the conviction of the truth of spirituality to them will scarcely be possible. That man should never believe, I am not ready to say; but my expression referred only to the life on earth, not eternally.

I said I did not understand the remark, that the "first evidence that

spirits could communicate, was the evidence that God was of himself sufficient to the perfection of that which was of himself." It seemed to me that this was reasoning in a circle.

It was answered :

It sometimes requires circular reasoning to convince angular minds. But as God is able to perfect his own works, is powerful enough to contrive the most stupendous labors, and achieve them too, it proves that he is able to accomplish any thing which is of himself. Spirit is of himself, and the evidence of spirit-communion is surely proof that the spirit being of himself, he is able to give it the ability to manifest its existence to spirit on earth.

I remarked that I was done with my questions. .

And then it was written :

I am almost unable to continue to-night the teachings I designed, for the feelings of irritability in a circle, however evanescent, always retard the full flow of spirit-influence. There are, to many minds, circumstances of such ecstatic pleasure, that they produce, in their reaction, great pain. Oh! how the eternal mind is governed and controlled by its connection with the body! How many associations, dearly remembered as of joy, are not alone of the mind, but partake of the body's participation! Thus we often feel, and sensibly too, those impressions which bring to the recollection the real affection of mind as well as the body. I mean, we miss those with whom we are associated, whether on terms of intimacy or as mere common acquaintance, but whom we are daily and hourly in the habit of seeing. When they are gone, we feel their loss. How much more must the mind feel the loss of those with whom we were associated by intellect, as well as by ties of blood! But enough.

When spirits are weighed down by their own density, they sink, as I mentioned, to the places lower than the earth.

They are attracted thither by their minds. They desire

no progress, or if they do, the desire is so little that it is swallowed up in the stronger desires for error. The condition of these spirits may demand notice.

I think I mentioned that it was said that their place of residence was a large plain, and I here remark that the plain is almost entirely alike in every part, suggesting scarcely any feeling of beauty or love of it, and is relieved only by one mountain. It is here that the spirits toil and wrangle. They labor, of course, more than the advanced spirits, as their organization being more dense, requires more to support it. They can not rise without a great effort, and being always compelled to associate with spirits whose internal is of the same erroneous and dark character, it generates all kinds of contentions and disputes, and, perhaps, deceit and falsehood. At any rate their affinities for good are, as it were, suspended. They do not possess the power to see the thought before its utterance, but they act toward each other as man and man on earth, that is, not entirely so, but nearly in the same manner.

One great evil which attaches to these spirits, is the obscurity of their ideas concerning God. They realize that there is a God, but they can not comprehend why that God differs from themselves. Then, again, their ideas of beauty are buried in the accumulation of error which surrounds their minds. They have but little conception of the duties which belong to them. As they do not love God, they do not love their neighbor, but they are always ready to mislead and provoke, to disturb and annoy. They are, as it were, incapable of much information. Were the desire to learn to be raised in their souls, they would begin to progress. Still, they are not entirely beyond the reach of improvement; they have not entirely lost all appreciation of what is beautiful in the works of God. For it is told me that when they are led to ascend the summit of the mountain, and behold the glorious brightness of the space beyond, their spirits yearn to leave their dark sphere, and they commence to make the effort.

Their habits of life correspond with the tone and character of their minds. They have no pleasures, no associates. They do not study. They do not sing, write, or enjoy life in any way, except the delight they may have in tormenting those around. They toil for sustenance, and as their land is sandy, and no sunlight, there must be great labor to enable the earth to bring forth enough to sustain them.

When one of these spirits has a desire to leave that sphere, and by that desire and its effects is awakened to come nearer the earth, he does not lose the disposition which placed him in that sphere all at once. It is by these spirits that the accounts, garbled and untrue, of the world beyond your earth are given, through some medium with whom they have come in contact.

They delight in error; and you can imagine what that condition must be, when the soul recognizes no God, but a being as themselves—what their unhappiness is, who can not appreciate either love or truth—what their minds must be, when their whole enjoyment is the wickedness of evil and the production of error.

Do they suffer? Yes, when their minds receive the light of truth, when by its rays their whole nature is laid bare, when they can understand how much they have lost, how much they must regain.

Are they unhappy? Yes; after having left those dark spheres, they daily and hourly feel how much their affinity retards their upward progress, and draws them downward toward those spheres again, when they know how little they can appreciate what is before, when they know the nature of those with whom they associate.

Perhaps there is no greater unhappiness to the soul of man than the full conviction that his heart is evil, and that he is daily and hourly struggling to overcome its tendencies.

Thus it is with them, and I must leave to your minds to imagine what I confess I am unable to describe.

Section Twenty-five.

Friday, May 20th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, after some conversation, the Doctor's hand became affected, and it was written :

My dear friends, I hardly know how to address you, and the endearing terms of affection with which my heart overflows will scarcely be satisfied with the formal word, friend. Brothers, then, companions, fellow-laborers in the cause of love, truth, and progress, I hear you and understand you; and especially you, dear Judge, do I appreciate in reference to the subject of your wishes. Could I make you to know, by absolute evidence, how much I study the deeper workings and sentiments of your soul, there would not remain in your mind even the shadow of regret at any thing which takes place which you suppose may be misunderstood. Sweedenborg knows every thing in relation to both circumstance and feeling, and he is ready to unite with me in saying that the sympathies of his spirit are tendered to your own, and that the struggle in your heart will prove more of a blessing than you can now possibly appreciate. Such conflicts with past agony are the agents which disengage all that is of alloy in your nature, and bring forth to the understanding of your own consciousness and the minds of your friends the pure gold of your nature, purified as in a furnace seven times heated. Let, then, your feelings be calm, for placidity is an attribute of Gcd. Look forward and above all petty annoyances that interrupt your mental progress, and be assured you will soon be qualified to look down on every thing that irritates and vexes, as one who is on a high mountain on the scenery at the foot, and wonder why the distance makes every thing so diminutive.

BACON.

I then told him that I had received an invitation which I proposed to accept, to address an assemblage in Connecticut next week; and said that I thought of adopting, as the subject of my discourse, the questions I had discussed last summer at Troy; namely, why spiritual intercourse had not come before, and why it had come now?

It was written :

Yes, but in addition teach them that the object of spirit-intercourse is to purify and elevate the nature of man, and that one great feature of these revelations is to disabuse the mind of errors, which have been engrafted on their hearts, as the results of an overweening faith in the doctrines erroneously inculcated as of God, and as found in the Bible.

Teach them that there is no such thing as understanding God separate from his works; that the human mind, the result of natural combinations and material organization, has not the ability to penetrate beyond the circle of organic connection; that, as every thing which would illustrate God is mixed with the creation of his hand, and as every thought has its source in the thousand impressions received from the direct influence of material combinations, it can not realize spirit distinct and separate, and therefore the thousand shapes in which God is presented, the various elaborate devices to picture him as a spirit, entirely fail to impress the mind with the idea of what he is and how he acts unconnected with the personation of his existence in the world which he has created. Then as man can not realize God without these aids, he can not realize the true intent and purpose of his laws in regard to spirit-intercourse without investigation and calm dispassionate examination.

Lead them to the higher doctrines taught, as far they will be benefited, and tell them that the perfect man is a type of the being who fashioned him, as he is an emblem of the eternal principle of truth and love.

As the Christ says, I came not to destroy, etc., so we come not to destroy or subvert any doctrine which will afford to man a hope predicated on bases which are distinct from the fabrications of man.

We have as much earnest desire for man's happiness on earth as had the apostles of old or the ministers of the present day, and we labor to insure his soul after death happiness eternal.

We desire that his life on earth should be happy, and teach you that when man's whole conduct is just and pure he must be so. As the un sinful heart recognizes no congeniality in any thing which produces evil, so no man can be unhappy whose mind embraces the good of existence and rejects the evil.

We teach you that when man begins to learn what he is capable of accomplishing, he will not remain satisfied until he has fully understood how much there is in the eternal connection of life with immortality; that the soul when conscious that it possesses inherent attributes, which have been confined, aye, trammelled, by the stern emanations and dictation of ideas taught as true, and that these inherent powers when left to themselves, when granted the freedom of unbiased thought, will throw off all bonds of sect or denomination; then, then does it feel the first glow of honest exultation that its ultimate destiny is limited to no pulpit or the faith taught at its altars. But that a life of purity, of love, of earnest and sincere struggle here, gives it a claim on the world to which it of right belongs; that no being can be happy after death, no matter how much he believes or what he believes, who has not fulfilled the obligations of his nature.

Why has God placed man under the control and influence of laws which generate a thousand circumstances in which he participates *nolens volens*? Why are the imperative demands of life made to attract around him other demands which apply alone to his feelings, his passions, or his desires? This is not orthodoxy, I admit, but it is divesting the present of its mysticism, and it is opening the future to the full gaze of man's mind. It is the dower of his descent, the prerogative of his birth. Do you cavil at the so-called truths of a priest of Rome or a clergyman of England's

church, the truths which they profess to teach and which differ so widely in their application and in their foundation? If not satisfied with either of them, you seek for other sources where you may rest, and drink the water of life. Go you, then, to those who profess that in their heart's change they have found the Alpha and Omega of their researches. What then? Have they made God a man, that they should surround him with the petty sentiments of their own natures, and drag him down to earth and force him to revenge his wrongs or to punish man eternally for violating laws which he has founded? How have they represented the God who is unapproachable by human thought? How have they described man, who is a part of that God himself? For what conceivable or inconceivable purpose could man have been created—to live under the effect of laws governing an organization which responds to the influences of the same laws in like materials around him? How hold him accountable for obeying the irresistible force of affinities which exist in matter as well as spirit? True, the spirit's affinities he can direct, but his material nature is bound by the iron band of laws over which he has no power. Thus, then, it is taught, God must be the creature of the same circumstances, and because he is a God, must manifest passions as the attributes of his spirit which emanate alone from material organization.

But when, after all, you compare the doctrines which to reject is heresy and to deny is infidelity with what the promptings of your soul tell you is the truth, you then separate the two existences which identify man—his material part and his spiritual nature; you then look with astonishment on the crude fashionings which ascribe to God the feelings and passions of man's material part, and yet deny to him what is essentially and alone the germ to which he belongs.

According to such teachings truth is a comparison: to-day it is truth to believe Methodism, to-morrow Romanism; but you will find that the answer to your question of last

night is this (and it was answered by Sweedenborg, who requests me to write it to-night), that the effect of these revelations as truth, is to direct the mind to the recognition of one God and his laws, and that the belief will be universal when the teachings shall have been given so explicitly as to enable man to comprehend what we mean. There will be no difference of sect or denomination, and there will be no division on the great fundamental principles which we hope to be able to give through you.

I called his attention to a portion of the next to last sentence, which seemed to me obscure.

He answered :

I think Sweedenborg did not understand your question ; but at any rate I will consult him, and ascertain. I answer, yes ; but the effect of our belief on the heart will be to establish a universal doctrine, which shall have no shades of difference, but be accepted as a unit. The time will come [and on hearing the teaching read, I saw what he meant] when the effect on the heart will be to bring all men to believe on God, on love, on progress, without any subdivision, without any shades or distinctions, and thus this change will be evident, as it will differ so essentially from all religion which has before been given to man. You must recollect that Sweedenborg was teaching, or intended to teach, you its effects in the future, though he used the word *effect* in the present time. That, I am confident, was his idea.

A change which involves doubt or includes discussion can not be radical. The change I refer to is the soul's recognition of its ultimate destiny. There can be no doubt on this point, there can be no discussion, there is no difference in the belief of any true spiritualist, that the ultimate destiny of the soul is progression, that it commences on earth, and ends only when the body becomes so purified that it is fit to enter the celestial spheres.

Your idea is a comparison of present change in belief,

but there are so many colorings and aspects to that belief, that there is no belief about it. When I spoke about a change, I referred to that which would be produced in the whole understanding, including not only the action presently, but that which extends beyond the grave, and divests death of all its terrors.*

* As early in my researches as October, 1851, the following teaching was given, which it seems to me will not be unillustrative of these remarks :

" Your attachment to your preconceived notions is very unfortunate, and much retards your progress, because it does not leave your mind open to the reception of truth. When any new truth is unfolded to you, you do not calmly investigate it and ask your reason if it is right, but you apply to it the standard of your preconceived notions, and if it conflicts with them you are at once prepared to battle it, not because it is unfounded in reason, but because it does not agree with what you have previously thought. And this arises from the fact, that you have not in reality the belief you think you have. If you had a firm and unwavering belief, if you knew you were right, you would not care what was said in conflict with it. But you have not. You have persuaded yourself that you believe certain things. You think you ought to believe, and you resolve you will. But not being sure you are right, any thing which tends to show your faith to be unfounded annoys you, arouses your combativeness, and takes away from your mind that even balance, and that susceptibility to the reception of truth, which is so essential both to intellectual and spiritual progress."

Section Twenty-six.

Sunday, May 22d, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, in the presence of all the circle but myself, this was written out:

WHILE we are listening to thoughts from the spirit-land, and wonder at the developments made of what have been mysteries, have we, when our hearts have been filled with joy at the description of the beautiful abodes of the just, and the happiness diffused like air through all the higher spheres of the spirits' dwelling-place, have we ever asked ourselves the question—for what purpose are these teachings? Why have spirits left their homes, their pursuits, their affections, their upward flight toward the ultimate point of their existence? Why have they come to us, and why have they taught us the higher truths of spirit-revelation? Why have they selected us as the recipients of spirit-bounty?

Is it not that your own natures should be made to correspond with the pure and holy existences of those good spirits whose habits, life, and progress we have described? Is it not that you should struggle to elevate your own internal natures, and divest yourselves of those characteristics which mark you as still bound in the fetters of error?

How hard have you struggled? How much have you succeeded? And how long will it be before you shall have cast off all that cloaks your true feelings, and manifest the true condition and action of your life? How long will you battle with causes which you suffer to influence you, and not purge yourselves of all unrighteousness?

These are grave and important inquiries, which should be put to every heart, and earnestly too, sincerely too, in the spirit of truth, of love, and of strong desire to answer truly the responses of our own hearts, before our friends who know, and the God that made us.

In a spirit, to-night, of affection, that brings you near my soul, and with a love that brings me to you for the high object of doing you good, do I greet you in the name of God.

SWEDENBORG.

I do not imagine the moral condition of the spirits of the lower spheres differs materially from the moral condition of the unprogressive man in your world. They may, it is true, have moments when their spirits yearn for the brighter spheres beyond their dark plane, when conscious of its birthright, the soul awakens to a sense of its own degradation, and realizes its true situation ; but they live and act as unprogressive man does, daily performing their accustomed round of malicious action, and carrying out the designs of their blunted perceptions ; and it is not till some event, out of the ordinary occurrences of life, arouses them completely, and opens their understanding to the reception of truth, that they begin to progress. There is so little difference in the whole action of spirit-life from your life, except that one step forward has been made (I do not refer to the higher spheres of course), that the correspondence is almost exact. Their remorse, when made sensible of their wickedness, must be more keenly felt than by man. Here they can have the tangible evidence of truth, of the beauty of holiness. With you, much of course must be appreciatory.

But when the spirit is awakened to a full view of all that is before him, with the bright spirits of friends and relations near him, with all that can assure him and support him, then it is that the full consciousness of his degradation crushes him like a weed ; his agony is indeed overpowering. It is the terrible workings of repentance in spirit divested of the grossness of materiality.

As far as my knowledge goes, the just comparison is not to be found in the lives of the dark or lower spirits. I mean the just comparison of the sufferings which the spirit endures when in the bonds of wickedness, or, rather, when not fulfilling the object of his induction into the spheres. They live as if they did not realize any thing beyond their own misty dwelling-place, as if they were incapable of being impressed with the good and true. But the just comparison is to be found in those spirits who are occupied in their advancement, whose efforts are made to rise from sphere to sphere, where mind and thought are filled with the hope, the glorious hope, of ascending toward those bright abodes where there can be no sin, where there can be no retrogression. When they commit a fault, then it is that the true suffering for sin is witnessed. You behold them in an agony so sincere, so dignified, so elevated, so soaring, so self-sacrificing, that it seems as if the soul itself was in travail, and would give birth to a purity and love almost divine. And I apprehend it is always those who have made some progress in goodness and truth who suffer, for how can the heart which has become hardened by sin suddenly realize all the holiness of truth and all the beauty of goodness? Simply when a man for a long course of years has lived in the exercise and under the directions of his perverted passions, and his heart, his mind, his spirit, and his thought have during that time declined any participation with what is good, and have cast off all association with either God, or those men or means which would have directed his mind to the contemplation of his attributes; and accustomed to think wickedly, he acted so, and thus his mind and tastes, his very nature in the whole, sought for present happiness in those things which were evil. Now, suppose he is suddenly impressed with the idea of sin, and the conviction is overpowering, so much that he determines to live henceforth a good life, do you think his appreciation of the good, the noble, the generous, of charity, of truth, of benevolence, of beauty, of error, of man—yes, and of God, can be

an appreciation which unfolds to his soul the startling comparison of what sin must be and is, when, indeed, he has made the contrast with those virtues? No, this is impossible. Nature, or God, never develops any thing at once or immediately. Every thing has its beginning, its increase, its progress, and, may be, its decline. But to man, this sudden upturning of all that applies to his nature and to his habits is, in my opinion, equivalent to a new construction. But when the heart that has constantly contemplated the goodness of God, the emanations of his hands, and the gushing tenderness of his love, when it for years struggled to subvert all that is of error or wrong in its very imaginings, then when convicted of that wrong, it bows its soul in very misery before its own weakness, it looks only to God for help and assistance.

Thus, I say, the progressive spirit suffers more of what may be called Hell, than even the degraded spirit, and can only begin to suffer when it begins to rise.

Every spirit has some daily duty. They work for the benefit of themselves and the good of all. They are divided by their own wishes and tastes into all those classes which emanate from the various necessities and conveniences of community. But their labor is comparatively light, and their time is occupied a good deal in the higher labors of thought, social intercourse, visiting, and study. In addition, they develop beauty whenever and wherever they can, and thus they bring themselves nearer to truth by impressing on their souls the idea of its nature. From the sparkling star which twinkles in the distance, to the full blaze of the noonday sun; aye, from the little pebble to the lofty mountain, whose jagged rocks turn toward their Creator, from the vilest creeping evidence of life, through all and every part of creation, to the man who is at its head, God has made and fashioned every thing as beautiful, and taught us to consider the works of his hands as good.

Spirits visit much, and it seems as much a part of their lives to visit their friends, as it is faithfully to perform their

other obligations. Thus they visit their friends in the sphere to which they belong, or the sphere below them. But their longest visits, and those considered most a duty, are those which they make to their friends on earth. That occupies no little portion of their time, and while with you they are accomplishing some one of the specific duties which are required of them in the sphere to which they belong.

When visiting a sick friend, they stay as long as it may be consistent with their feelings, or the state of the disease. And when a death occurs, they are ready to receive the spirit. When a friend is depressed in feeling, or has some great trouble to overcome, or when he or she has suffered from the wrong of other friends, or when about to do wrong, or when about to do good, then it is that they flock around, and by their impressions aid, or try to direct, as may be proper.

But the time is passed almost, and I must leave. Good-night.

Section Twenty-seven.

Monday, May 23d, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and Mr. and Mrs. S. were present. We had for two or three hours manifestations through Mrs. S., of which I give an account only so far as they were of general interest. She became influenced by what was evidently to us a new spirit. The influence seemed to be uncomfortable, and I approached and made passes over her, in order to relieve her. She pushed me from her, and retreated to a distant part of the room, and there stood gazing at me. I did not at all understand it, when it was written through the Doctor's hand:

Let your will be firm, yet *mild*, Judge, and will gently its true manifestation.

I then walked up to the spirit as manifested in her, and stood in front of it, looking steadily at it. It told me, with a good deal of vehemence, to go away. I replied, No; I can't do that. I must know who you are, and what you have come here for.

After looking for an instant steadily in my eye, it sank on the floor at my feet, and embraced my knees. It wept, crawled upon the floor, and finally lay prostrate. At this moment it was written through the Doctor:

Speak to the spirit, Judge, kindly, and ask who it is.

I did so, and it arose to a sitting posture, and looking at me, said:

I am not obliged to tell you my name.

It was then written:

In the name of God, Yes. Hand to the Judge.

This was handed to me by the Doctor, and when I read it, I said to the spirit, You must tell me your name and purpose. It is in the name of God I demand it.

It looked at me, and then, after something of a pause, said, in a gentle voice:

Yes, I must tell my name.

Well, what is it?

Tom Jones.

You are fooling me. I want your true name, no fictitious one.

My true name is Jones.

Are you, then, the spirit of one who was tried before me for murder, was condemned to death by me, and executed?

Yes, I am he, Judge. Oh, forgive me, forgive me!

Nay, I have nothing to forgive; but in the name of Heaven, with what purpose have you come to me?

Do you know why I embraced your knees just now? Well, Judge, I was so thankful that I was removed by your mandate from my former state of ignorance and blindness into the next sphere, where I have become a man, and I am now sent here by wise ones to speak to you.

Why, then, were you so reluctant to give me your name?

It is so hard for an ignorant man like me to make myself understood. In the first place, I thought I was an unwelcome guest. In the next place, it was hard for me to manifest myself.

A very accurate account of what he said was not kept, and so I can only state the substance of it.

He said he was commanded by wise spirits to come and talk to me, to let me know of the great change in himself, and that he now exists where he can realize all that is good.

He said that he was sacrificed to laws which one class condemned as barbarous, and another regarded as necessary; that one class deemed they ought to render good for evil, and the other, that "eye for eye" ought to be rendered. That he was told, however, that the laws which required that such as him who had raised their hand to take what they could not give should be put out of existence would be unnecessary when the revolution of morals shall be accomplished, in which, he said, you, Judge, are taking so prominent a part.

He acknowledged the wisdom and justice of the sentence which sent him out of this life, and he came to give his experience, as one who had been relieved from the evils brought upon him by the present ill-organ-

ized state of society, and who, through an evil deed, had been unhared into a better and happier state than that which he occupied while here.

I remarked, that I supposed it was the force of circumstances which had led him to commit the deed for which he had suffered?

He answered:

That is it, Judge. That is the evil of society. I knew it was wrong, but my mind had not been so educated as to teach me to control my passions. They ran wild, and forced me into every excess, and I finally became reckless.

He said that I must not suppose he was convicted of a bloody crime, and then sent direct to a state of happiness. Oh, no; far from that. But when his spirit was released from his vile body, made so by his evil passions, he was led to a spot, and told to choose his companions. On one side they were black and dark, blacker than himself, and distorted with evil passions. On the other, they had been vile, like himself, but they were not all dark, a little light shone upon them, and their faces were turned upward with hope. "My choice, Judge," he said, "was soon made, for I never loved evil for the sake of evil, but I was led into it by circumstances combined with my unregulated passions." Now, when on one side he saw that dark repulsiveness, he beheld himself in his real image, he recoiled from himself, and sought to fly far away to join those who looked so much in advance of him, and said to himself, polluted sinner that he was, there might yet be mercy for him who had despised it, who had turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of justice; and he saw clearly which path he was to tread to reach that happiness which he never sought on earth.

And, Judge [said he], I made my choice. I braced my heart against evil, I stood firm in the strength of my manhood to do right, and began my labor for eternity; that labor which should have been begun in my youth. I have so far been able to advance upward, that I have been permitted, have been commanded, to come and speak to you of my condition. It was a hard task, as you may imagine, to come to you.

I asked him, Why so?

Did I not know that my presence would be unexpected and repulsive? Did I not fear that you would not wish to hear me? But I was commanded by wisdom that does not

err, and which has guided me so far. The light that is around me is yet dim and obscure, but it is becoming stronger and brighter, and will continue to grow so.

Forgive me, Judge, my wicked thoughts toward you, forgive me! forgive me!

My friends above are patiently waiting when I shall be divested of my grossness and darkness. My mother, my gentle mother! I shall see her face again. My father! I have erred. They tell me I shall see you both again. God is merciful. His mercy endureth forever.

With these words he left us.

After he left, a female spoke to us through Mrs. S., who put on a good many airs. She fanned herself with her handkerchief, complained that the air was close and oppressive, walked to and fro with a stately air, said it was not often she visited such obscure places. She had occupied in her time stately palaces and marble halls, etc. When asked her name, she said it was so long since she had heard it that she had forgot it, etc.

Mrs. S. then went through the death-scene, and the same spirit spoke to us through her again. She said she had been a lunatic, and had died in an asylum. That when she died, for a few hours after her death she labored under the same insanity, but it soon passed away, for she had left the disease behind with the body which had caused it. And now she knew her real position, and she understood the necessity of progression.

After she left, another came, who first represented through the medium a fine lady in the form. She professed to be extravagantly fond of music and dancing; said she was altogether too ethereal for earth, but her mind was intent upon her pleasures. She had a dry, hacking cough, and complained of a pain in her breast. She asked the Doctor if she could not with safety attend a ball to-night.

In a little while she, too, went through the death-scene, and her spirit appeared just entering upon the next sphere.

She was first intent on examining herself. She looked at her limbs, and seemed surprised at herself, and somewhat disgusted. She often asked, "Where am I? where am I?" She said there were many persons around her, but she did not know them. She said she was very unhappy, that that was not heaven, and in a sorrowful tone inquired, "What shall I do?" At length, among the people she recognized one whom she called "Anna, my old schoolfellow." She asked her how long she had been there, and what she did there? It seemed she got an answer that they labored and studied. "Labor!" she cried, "I never la-

bored! and study! I can't study; I never studied. But she says I may do as I please. May I? Then I vow I won't study. But what do you do here? Have you no music and dancing? No? Then what shall I do? I shall be so unhappy among all these strange, dark people. But she says, if I will labor and study I may get away from this unhappy, dismal place. Then I vow I'll study and work hard, hard. So good-night, friends, I am going to my studies."

Section Twenty-eight.

Wednesday, May 25th, 1853.

This evening, in my library, Mr. and Mrs. S. being present a part of the time, the interview began by writing the following in the tremulous hand of a very old man.

WHAT is one moment of joy, the joy of the spirit, when it realizes the good it has done to years of this world's pleasure!
I. T. T.

Then this was written.

This is the spirit, and a bright one too, of an old man whom you knew slightly, years ago, but who desires not to-night to give his name.

Let us proceed with our work.

(Which was the revision of the previous teachings.)

After that had closed, it was written:

For a few moments listen to another kind of teaching. No gifted one can enter into our charmed circle without his or her proper share of work.

In a short time Mrs. S. was influenced, and spoke as follows:

MY EARTHLY FRIENDS:

I have been permitted to return to my old, my former

place of abode for a few moments, that I may give you a few of the sentiments which now fill my soul with wonder and admiration.

I have not been long an inhabitant of these upper regions, of which I am about to speak; but short and blissful as my experience has been, I would not exchange it for all the honors and glories which a thousand years on earth, with all their changing scenes of times, and of action, and opinions might heap upon me.

My station on earth was considered an honorable one; by my fellow-countrymen I was looked up to as endowed with a degree of wisdom which enabled me to—

[Here his power over the medium, which had been evidently diminishing, seemed to be spent, and after several efforts to finish the sentence, it was written through the Doctor's hand:]

enabled me to exert a controlling influence over the minds of my fellow-men. The spirit wished to say that.

There was then something of a pause, and at length the spirit seemed to recover his influence, and continued his teaching in these words:

And I have since discovered that many things which were said and done by me have left a lasting impression behind; and for all those true and earnest efforts which were made for the good of my fellow-men in the form, and which have left their impression on the race, I now thank God from my inmost soul. But for many others done by me in moments of thoughtlessness, or when acting under the impulses of impetuous feeling or aroused passions, my deepest regrets are awakened, and the more that I am daily witnessing their baleful effects.

It is very delightful, after leaving the earth, my friends, to return and look back on a life well spent in doing unto others as I would that they should do unto me. It is a most pleasant reflection, and gives back a sweet perfume from earth even while dwelling in heaven.

My mind is gazing back on the hours spent while here, and I have thought, within the depths of my soul, that

were it my mission to return again to the form I left, and live over again my short life, how differently would I employ it!

It is but a reflection, for well I know it is impossible. But how clearly does reflection cause every past action to stand forth before my eyes in bold relief at this moment! It is so impressed on my mind, and oh! how I would impress it upon others, how much of joy or sorrow, of heaven or hell, we create for ourselves!

I have been permitted to come here, night after night, and gaze upon the wise spirits who have been directing your minds to higher wisdom than mine has ever tasted of. My soul has expanded, and my soul swelled out, as I have gazed on the vast fields of living light and beauty that, spread before me, are yet to be explored.

My labor has but begun; I am but learning the first lessons of profound knowledge, which belongs not to earth, but to eternal and ever-living happiness. What a mere child of knowledge I realize myself to be when gazing around me!

Wise men of earth! could you but gaze up and see the wisdom that is around you, and ever impressing your minds, your wisdom would seem so foolish you would veil your faces in meekness and humility, and you would feel glad and thankful to see those majestic forms who surround you, who assist and uphold you by their wisdom, and whisper words of strength to your weakened spirits, when struggling for light, like the bird struggling in the net of the fowler.

I would again say, did the wise men of the earth know how much they depend on sources other than themselves, they would not be puffed up so much with their own self-love. The impression of their self-importance would be dimmed, and they would be willing to come as little children to learn internal wisdom.

Here the influence seemed to wear away again, and after remarking

that this was his first effort, and that, with our permission, he would come again at another time, he left.

Mrs. S. then asked what it was that prevented inferior or unprogressed spirits, if any thing, from thrusting aside superior ones, and communicating in their stead?

It was answered:

What hinders a loafer, as you call him, from seeking the society of a parson or a judge? Want of congeniality with the tone of your minds.

Mrs. S. asked whether spirits actually saw material objects through her eyes?

It was answered:

Does the Judge look through his spectacles?

She asked if the spirit present could read her mind?

It was answered:

I can't do that, unless I were with you constantly, and influenced you often.

She inquired why it was that while inferior spirits, whose influence was unpleasant, would at times thrust themselves upon her, superior spirits never did?

It was answered:

They ask permission. A good spirit *never* obtrudes himself. When an inferior one does, resist him in the name of God, and he will always go away.

She said something about retiring as it was late.

I said that it mattered not, as the spirits did not care about the time. They were often with us until after midnight.

It was written:

We take no note of time, but in the good we do. The minutes lengthen into hours, the hours to days, the days to years, the years merge always in eternity. BACON.

Section Twenty-nine.

Thursday, May 26th, 1853.

The circle met at Dr. Dexter's; his hand was influenced, and the following was written:

FROM the farthest verge of my sphere, where the reflected brightness of the celestial land sheds its glorious sunshine over all, where the good and true, the ever-living, the ever-progressing spirit sends up his shout of joy and gladness, where the untiring and never-ceasing action is forward and upward, come I to-night with my soul radiating the brightness of that sphere, and a spring of gushing love in my heart toward you, my friends, whom to meet is indeed a joy even to me. I give you my spirit-blessing, and greet you in God's name. SWEEDENBORG.

The properties of our nature are so multifarious, that it is a matter of no little trouble justly to discriminate between what are the results of our organic condition, and what the offspring of our spirit-consciousness. It is difficult for human nature to appreciate the capacities of its own organization, the almost omnipotent powers of mind, and the vast development corresponding to the spirit's intimacy with matter.

Why do you educate your sons and daughters? Why do you admire and revere the man who is learned and wise? Were you to take the material answer, you would imagine that to educate, was to store his brain and memory with an array of facts, or impress his mind with the Greek and Latin languages, or with mathematics, or with philosophy, or with astronomy, or, indeed, with any or all of the

sciences, that he or she might become a man or woman capable of perfectly performing their part in life; or that the one or the other might, by their acquirements, have the chance of accumulating a fortune by their advantageous exercise; or that a wise man or a learned man was, indeed, to be revered and respected as one who knew more than you know; whose understanding had so far outstripped the common workings of that attribute of mind, that he must certainly be able to see farther into the misty night of the future, and to select from the shadowy outlines of the events in store those which will put the most money into his strong-box, or give him greater power and control over his fellow-man. Are not these the recognized ideas of learning, of wisdom among men? That the true end of wisdom is to enable one to amass either power or wealth by its exercise?

But the education of the spirit is not alone the filling the brain with the crude notions of other brains, or storing up in the capacious receivers of its vast magazines the facts or results of every known doctrine. No; neither is it the fashioning of its ideas according to the prescribed doctrines of Jew or Gentile, Romanist or Protestant; it is coloring it neither with the glaring red of bigotry, the somber hues of fanaticism, or the dull, dark, and ever black features of error. No, no; the mind, educated, is but bringing the spirit nearer the material world with which it is connected, by removing the impediments to its true manifestation. It is not the body or the brain that can retain the teachings of the schools, after they shall have perished in death and turned to the dust out of which they were created. The corner-stone of your churches shall last as a memento of the force of stern will long after the hands that laid them shall have moldered, and their very names be forgotten.

What then? The spirit it is, which receives and retains; the spirit it is, which can not erase the impressions that truth, knowledge, or love have made on its intelligence. The spirit it is, which, brought near your earth by the re-

removal of all the barriers of matter, speaks to you as your own spirits would speak to you, were they capable of presenting their true properties amid all the grossness which surround them. Bring the spirit near the world, then; you can not injure even its ethereal and sublimated organism, strong as are the forces which oppose its manifestation. By thus doing though, it may benefit the world, secure as it is in the propriety and soundness of the doctrines it professes, and the purity and loveliness of all its motives.

I have been led to make these remarks to-night, before proceeding to my regular subject, from a comparison between your world and the bright and glorious spheres from which I have just arrived.

It is not always that I am just returned from my sphere when I visit you at the circle; but, to-night, I had even that moment arrived from the sphere to which I belong, when I touched the Doctor's hand. By my own wishes, as well as by my mission, I am connected with your earth, and though, indeed, I have often the privilege of returning to my home, still I never leave it for earth without contrasting the almost incomprehensible difference between them.

But I will say a few words on my proper subject, and then I must leave you.

If the pure spirit suffers so much when conscious of wrong, how much must it rejoice when it feels the inspiring power of its own elevated desire lifting it, as it were, upward and onward toward heaven! How joyful, yes, ecstatic—how glorious must be the feelings of that spirit whose desires, whose aspirations, have directed him to those bright lands where the sun of truth, of love, of charity never declines!

Starting from the second sphere, which is the first point of its appreciable spirit-existence, it sends the eye of inquiry through all the spheres beyond, and revels in the unfoldings of that glance.

Think you that the spirit would be satisfied with green

fields, or bright skies, or balmy breezes, or even the dazzling radiance of the sun itself as a dwelling-place, if its innate yearnings were not gratified, the hope of throwing off all that is possible of his material creation, and exercising as a spirit belonging to the Godhead itself those attributes which characterize it as an intelligence?

What is the soul's longing after knowledge, truth, love, charity—yes, all that is good, wise, great, and beautiful—but the desire to exercise in some condition these properties as a right of its nature, when it shall have increased in the magnitude of its activity, and, conscious of its divine origin, it can ministrates as a spirit to the great good of the whole of which it is a part? Good-night.

Section Thirty.

Wednesday, June 1st, 1853.

This evening, in my library, the Doctor and I alone present.

There was a good deal said that was of a personal character, which it would not be worth while to insert here, except only so far as to show the nature and closeness of the intercourse which is going on between us and the unseen intelligence that speaks.

Thus, in reference to some personal trouble of mine, it was written :

There are seemingly certain tides in organic nature, as there are in the ocean, whose broad bosom covers two thirds of earth's surface, and sigh out the various emotions which stir up its mighty sentiment. This occasion is a tide in your affairs, dear Judge, and could you know how your friends have with anxious care watched your feelings, sym-

pathized with all your emotions, but have truthfully revealed the nature of feelings which were assumed to direct you away from the glorious destiny before you! Oh! there is a love surpassing the love of earth. It brings as its guerdon no blending of passion. It regards the object with no hope of benefit to itself, and it covers and protects each hope, each joy, each emotion of the soul, as in that joy and hope it realizes the bond which connects the present with the future!

There has been no thought of your mind, no purpose of your heart, no struggle with yourself, that has not been recognized and responded to by those who love you for yourself. God bless you! God strengthen you! And the earnest desires, the heartfelt aspirations of your spirit-brothers are and will be offered for your happiness and peace of mind. Could you see this night the holy joy, the calmness which an unbounded confidence has diffused over the whole being of your spirit-friends, you would exclaim, "It is good for me to be afflicted, for then, indeed, know I my own strength."

BACON.

I made some remark, that the trial, though severe, would be profitable to me.

And it was answered:

Yes; but it will open before you a prospect so bright, so beautiful, so full of hope, and radiant, lasting joy, so free from care, from all sensuality, so devoid of self and its clashing interests, that the soul will be like unto him who is taken into a high mountain, and standing on its lofty summit overlooks all the kingdoms of the earth, admires their strength, their capacity, their vastness, but when lifting his eyes upward, he beholds in one twinkling star more of harmony, more of the true, the glorious, the divine, and he turns from earth with disgust, and looks to heaven with joy. 'Tis so with you. Onward! upward! The star is shining brightly above you. The air is calm and balmy. The spirits of friends are standing without, to

cheer you in your strivings with self. They whisper to you, Courage. They murmur words of hope, of encouragement; and they will afford you tangible evidence that their love is not for a day, but for all time.

Thus endeth, for the present, our conference on this subject.

I remarked to the Doctor about some teachings I had had the previous night, but which I did not get distinct enough to write down.

And it was written :

In the efforts made by us last night, we could not succeed so perfectly as we designed, from the state of comparative agitation of your mind. * * * * *

The images we impressed on your mind, though, perhaps, distinct enough, did not comprehend the whole of the teaching we had intended. If possible, we shall to-night try again, and hope to succeed better. We would suggest that no other subject be thought of except the spirits, and that your mind remain as passive as possible. The length of time that has intervened* since your last visions, destroys partially your susceptibility of immediate impression. You can, therefore, help us much, by observing these directions. In connection with what has been written, the teachings we shall try to image on your mind will enable you to make a much more varied and interesting book than if you published only our dry though important communications through the Doctor. And again, we wish through you to teach him many things which it is necessary he should know, and we have declined doing so through himself, as even now he questions, sometimes, if all is right. Much, very much is expected of him, and tried though he is now by many vexations, enough to discourage any one but one of his iron will, we mean that he shall triumph over all, and come out right.

Now, lie down on the sofa, and be calm and quiet for a

* It was more than a year.

while, and let us see what can be done. If you like, you can narrate what you see.

I then lay down on my sofa, merely covering my eyes with my handkerchief, to exclude external objects, and I saw the vision which I have described in the accompanying paper. I narrated it to the Doctor as I went along, and was about two hours in doing so.

VISION.

What I first saw was a range of mountains, beginning at my right hand, and running off diagonally across the scene, and ending far off in the distance, on my left. The outline of the hills was all I could at first see, but I observed that that was more regular than our mountains usually are. It had not those craggy, sharp points that we are accustomed to see—not those volcanic angles and earthquake-like breaks and fissures that characterize a country newly formed—but the summits were rounded off, as if Time in its progress had laid its softening hand on its rugged and rough features, and leveled them into lines of beauty. The light that shone upon them was faint and dim. It seemed as if the dawn was just breaking upon the earth.

The tops of the mountains were enveloped in a soft and grateful purple haze, and as they receded in the distance they seemed, as it were, almost to blend and melt away into the clear, soft sky which was over all. I was looking westward, and it was the dawn that was breaking behind me, which gave this beautiful tinge to the mountain top; but the base of the mountains, and the whole of the landscape between me and them were so far enshrouded in darkness that I could not distinguish their features.

Far in the distance, and beyond the mountains, a beautiful golden light* appeared, illumining the sky overhead, as

* I take this occasion to remark that I have been taught that the different colors of the light which appears to me in these visions are symbolical. Thus, a golden light represents affection; a silver light, wisdom; blue, truth; bronze, affection, tinged with an earthly taint; violet, a desire to progress, and crimson, a union of love and wisdom.

if it came from a country where such a light prevailed so powerfully as to be reflected back from the firmament above. This light did not, however, tend to enlighten my side of the mountains. It merely showed what was the radiance of the country beyond; and it must have been very, very grateful, for it was a soft, mellow, golden light, occasionally tinged with streaks of crimson, and once a bright silver star shone amid it for a moment, and then vanished.

As the day gradually dawned upon the scene, it became more visible to me, and I perceived that dense woods skirted the base of the mountains, and that the plain before me was beautifully diversified with trees, and lawns, and running streams. It was not cut up artificially, by fences, into fields, but, as it were, naturally, by rows of trees and shrubbery. Here there was a smooth, level meadow, with its carpet of green; there an undulating lawn, variegated with water, and grass, and growing trees; here there was a cascade, throwing its hoarse murmur abroad upon the silent air, and there a gentle stream or calm and placid lake. Here there was a clump of trees, entwining their tangled arms together over the deep shade that rested below, and there a single tree or two, beneath whose shelter animals were seen, giving life at once and repose to the scene. And, in fine, as the light of the morning increased, it opened to my view a lovely landscape, gently undulating and diversified by land and water, and field and forest. Many animals were seen moving about, or reposing quietly, playing wildly, or grazing or slumbering. Birds in great numbers, and with every variety of song and plumage, were flying across the scene in all directions, some just skimming the surface of the water, and others soaring aloft, up, up, until their melody seemed mingled with the distance.

As I stood gazing upon the scene, and its beauties thus gradually opening before me, I discovered faintly, in the distance, and near the base of the mountains, what seemed to be some ancient ruins of some work of man. I could not see them well so far off, and I approached to have a

nearer view. I discovered they were two high and very massive walls, built at a distance from and parallel to each other, and at right angles with the line of the mountains. They were very high, one or two hundred feet at least, I should think, and were built into and against the side of the mountains, and ran off some distance. They were very ancient, for moss and creeping vines grew upon them, and they were discolored with age. As I approached near them, I looked back upon the part of the scene where I had stood, and there discovered a large ocean, whose waters were gently moving, and throwing the hoarse roar of its ever-breaking surf gratefully on the ear. I perceived, also, that those walls had been originally intended to run from the mountains to the ocean, and so fence in a portion of the country from all intrusion from all other parts; but the walls remained standing only about half the distance, and the ends of them were rough and jagged, and I was at a loss to tell whether it was because the walls had there been thrown down, or had been built no farther originally. If the former, then I knew I must find near the base some of the monstrous stones of which the walls had been built; but I found none, and I discovered they had never been built any farther, and that the original intention of their erection never had been carried out.

In the inclosure formed by these walls and the side of the mountain, I saw a great number of men at work, digging into the side-hill with great vehemence, and never looking up or beyond the dark soil in which they were delving. It was evident they thought they had discovered a mine in the bowels of the mountain, and had partly inclosed themselves to prevent the intrusion of others. But they had been too impatient to complete their inclosure; one after another had abandoned that work, and gone to digging into the hill, until they had all rushed to the mines, and fell to penetrating its interior with furious haste. When I saw them, they had opened many caverns far in, and were just beginning others. Some were striking with pickaxes

into the bank, some shoveling away the rubbish, and others engaged in carts, carrying the dirt away, and emptying it down behind them, near the end of the walls. They did not stop to spread it out or level it smooth, but threw it carelessly in rude heaps, and hurried back for more.

The beautiful light which shone beyond the mountains approached the inclosure, and tinged the sky over it very beautifully, forming overhead a gorgeous canopy of golden and crimson light. Just outside the walls, easy to be seen and easy of access, was the lovely country which I have described, while inside the inclosure all was bleak, and barren, and gloomy. The men themselves were of a dark hue—like a negro turning pale—of a dull, dingy, somber color; and over them rested a dark mist, which rose from them, and partly obscured the light of heaven. None of them, it seemed, ever sought to penetrate that mist, to obtain a view of the beautiful canopy above them. None ever looked abroad upon the beauties of nature, which lay so profusely scattered around them, but all were intent solely upon their insatiate pursuit of the promised treasure, which, methought, still fled from them, and from which none of them had ever yet realized a tithe of their expectations. The only water I saw inside the walls was a stagnant and impure pool, from which even the brutes recoiled in disgust.

I noticed these things while I was standing near the extremity of the walls, and I turned away pained at the gloomy picture. As I did so, my eye rested upon the scene outside, and was inexpressibly relieved.

On the bosom of the ocean all was life and animation; on the land all was joy and gladness; and in the air all was light, resplendent, and balmy. Far off in the distance I saw marks of man's industry and skill, in beautifying the scene. Pyramids, and obelisks, and ornamental arches rose up amid the foliage in different places. And on the spot where I had stood at first was standing a gigantic human figure. It seemed to be stationary, yet was ani-

mated by intellect. The expression of its countenance was elevated and benevolent, and it raised its hand and pointed the dark denizens of that gloomy inclosure to the glorious light that was shining over them, trying thus to induce them to look up, and not ever be groveling in the earth.

As I thus stood drinking deep out of nature's pure inspiration, the sun arose from out the ocean. As its disk gradually came in sight, it lighted up the scene more and more, and opened its beauties to view. Its rays penetrated even the dark inclosure, but it only made its gloom more visible. I saw nothing there that was not revolting. No green thing grew there, but a few stunted parasitical plants, clinging with a sickly life to the barren rocks. The surface of the ground was rough and uneven; man had done nothing to smooth it or make it pleasant to him. I looked around in vain for any mansions, in vain for any cultivation of the ground, and I could not help asking myself, How do these people live? Whence is derived their food, but from the reptiles that, like themselves, grovel in the earth? Where do they repose their weary limbs, but on the dark soil they love so madly? And where, oh! where is their happiness?

I had in the mean time entered farther into the inclosure, and had approached so near the bank as to look into the dark caverns they had dug in their mad pursuit of those hidden and useless treasures. As I stood gazing in mute sorrow at the strange infatuation which had made these people voluntarily embrace so sad a life, I heard far down, deep into the bowels of the hill, the noise of a maddened conflict. It was approaching me. I heard the sound of blows, the agonizing shrieks of the wounded, and the oaths and blasphemous execrations of the combatants. They rushed madly along toward the mouth of the cavern, furiously contending as they approached. As they came in view, I saw they were armed with the various implements of their employment, and they struck with them, with a deadly malignity, as if more intent on hurting others

than defending themselves, as if malice had actually conquered selfishness. One man near the head of the crowd received a blow which felled him to the ground. The others paid no regard to him, but trampled him under foot, and passed on.

After they had all passed over him, he raised himself partly up, and seizing a stone that lay near him, hurled it, with a dying spasm, at the moving crowd. It struck one of them in the side, and wounded him. He turned, and seeing whence the blow came, he uplifted in both hands a huge stone, and approaching his fallen fellow, hurled it with crushing force upon his prostrate body, and then hurried away to join again the fighting throng. The blow, however, which he had given was harmless, for the poor wretch on whom it lighted had expired in the very effort he had made to hurt his fellow, and he was a dead man before his head touched the ground. Oh, man! man! is this thy high duty and destiny?

Meanwhile, the struggling crowd passed by me out toward the extremity, trampling under foot, in their furious career, as well the mangled bodies of the wounded among themselves, as the festering carcases of those who had died ere this, and been left to rot. Their numbers were constantly diminished by the effects of the fight, so that when they arrived out so far as to be near the end of the walls, a few only were left to carry it on.

I observed that one of them, who had been foremost in the contest, and whose furious energy had ever kept him near the head of the crowd, when they came out so far, was attracted by the scene which opened to his view, and particularly by the gigantic human figure which stood up so prominently in its midst. He ceased to fight, and stood still, wrapped in wonder at what he saw. The others, however, though reduced now in number to scarcely a dozen, continued the contest as furiously as ever. But while I gazed, an unearthly shriek rang clear and shrill through that dark atmosphere, the ground opened under their feet

and swallowed them up; earth to earth! dust to dust! and then settled as calmly over them as if it had never been desecrated by the footsteps of man's evil passions. And he who had paused to gaze on the unwonted scene was alone amid the darkness and desolation of that unholy place.

He did not observe the awful fate of his companions, but stood intently gazing on that gigantic and impressive figure. The sun had now risen some distance above the horizon, and he was so placed that the figure was directly between him and the sun, so that he did not see its orb, but only observed how brilliantly that wonderful specimen of humanity was lighted up by its rays.

He wondered if he could not approach nearer to it. He examined hastily, yet carefully, the ground around him, and finally, with hesitating steps, moved toward it. He had taken but a few steps before he was accosted by a female, who was middle-aged, highly polished according to earth's fashion, fascinating in her manners, and of clear, acute, and vigorous intellect. She engaged in conversation with him, and evinced deep sympathy with his emotion. He paused in his onward progress, attracted by her blandishments. I could not hear their conversation, but it seemed from their gestures that he was urging her to go on with him, and she persuading him to remain behind with her. He became impatient and irritable, while she remained so bland, yet so firm. At length he broke from her, and resumed his journey. He found it, at first, very rough, and he stumbled and tripped more than once over heaps of rubbish which had been thrown there in ages long past, and which were partially concealed from his view by the moss and weeds which time had thrown around them. At length he came to a pond, which seemed to be the receptacle, for long, long time, of all the refuse filth of the inclosure in which he had groveled so many years. Its waters were very offensive to sight and smell, yet he looked in vain for any means of going around it. It lay directly in his way, and on the opposite side of it he saw what seemed to him to be a com-

paratively smooth path, leading toward the colossal figure. He plunged in with a good deal of energy, and with a sort of vehement and unregulated impatience forced his way over its uneven bottom, and through its foul and slimy waters. When about midway through, the waters growing deeper, he became somewhat discouraged and paused. The female had not left her place, and she now spoke blandly to him, entreating him to return. He seemed to say with an oath that he would go through, and he pushed hastily on and through. He clambered on his hands and knees up the steep bank of the pond, seemingly regardless alike of the filth which covered him and of her endearments.

He had heard temptation sing, and yet he turned not
Aside. Saw sin bedeck her flowery bed,
And yet would not go up.

When he reached the summit of the bank, he saw before him a smooth and level path, meandering pleasantly amid the green pastures, skirted on both sides with trees and flowers, and fragrant shrubs. The path was open before him; there was no obstruction to his onward passage; yet he paused, for he could hardly believe that it was permitted for such as him, stained with his recent travel, and deformed by his past career, to pass along so pleasant a path. Again the female, who had retained her place, and was ready to avail herself of every opportunity, entreated him to return. With a gesture of impatience he waved her off, and pushed hastily forward, as if to get beyond the reach of her voice.

As he moved forward, his fevered cheek, fanned by the cool breeze that played around him, and all his passions lulled to rest by the soft murmurs of the running brooks of clear water, he saw approaching him in the distance, as from the feet of the gigantic figure, several persons,

"In robes of linen, flowing, white and clean."

They moved toward him slowly and gently, and as they approached I saw very many others, clothed in the same garb, coming from different directions, singly and in small parties, some over the hills, some from the valleys, some

from shaded bowers, but all hastening toward that path to meet him. There was on all their faces an expression of calm joy and heartfelt welcome.

As he approached the little party who first went out to meet him, he was so struck with the brightness and holiness of their appearance that he fell prostrate at their feet. One of them, distinguished above the others by the dignity of his mien, and the wisdom and benignity that beamed in his countenance, raised him from the ground with one hand, while pointing to heaven with the other, said, "Worship not us, worship God alone." As he said this, he gave one glance at the female, who still retained her place, hoping through all that she might yet win the wanderer back. She was now at a great distance, yet she saw and felt the glance, and she turned and, with piercing cries and frantic gestures, fled toward the mountain, and buried herself deep from sight in those dark caverns. Earthy she was, and to earth she fled.

The shining ones then clustered fondly around the dark mortal, and led him on in that path. He moved with slow and trembling steps, for with all their encouragement he could hardly be assured he was right in traveling there.

I observed that the other bright ones, who were hastening from different points to meet him, now lined the sides of the path along which he was timidly moving, and cheered him on by smiling looks and gestures of welcome; yet no one spoke but the beneficent one who had first lifted him from the ground, and he was bidding him be of good cheer, for he was now but what they, too, had once been, and what they were, he yet might be. Thus moving slowly along, they approached the base of the colossal figure, and it was only by measuring it by their height, that I became able to appreciate its magnitude. It was several hundred feet high, of complete human form, and with just proportions as such. Though stationary, it was animated by intellect, and though not the Creator, was yet by means of that intellect the governor of all around.

As they approached it, I also drew near, and discovered in its base a doorway into its interior, and that it was inhabited inside by those shining ones. .

The dark mortal was led by his kind and gentle conductors toward that doorway. He shrank back from it, appalled and trembling. It seemed dark to him. He saw nothing but the darkness which immediately enveloped the entrance. It was to him the door of death, and that had always been represented to him so terrible, so full of doubt and gloom, that he was fearfully agitated by its nearness. Several of his attendant guides, as if to reassure him, passed in and out before him, with smiling countenances, in order to persuade him how pleasant, at once, and safe the passage was.

But when at length he approached for the purpose of entering, he found there was spread across the doorway a very fine network, so fine as to be almost invisible, yet firm as adamant and strong as iron. Through it the bright ones passed with ease, but the dark one found himself too gross to make the passage, and he turned away with the thorough conviction that it could not be until he had purified himself of the grossness of his material nature that he could hope to enter.

In the mean time, while this was going on outside this figure, I entered it, and was permitted a rapid glance at its interior. It had many platforms or stories, as they would be called if we were speaking of a house, one above the other, which were approached by winding stairs. On these platforms it seemed that those shining ones dwelt, according to their various degrees of refinement, and ascended from one to the other according as they progressed in refinement and purity. The light of the sun, which I had seen rising out of the ocean behind it, entered the figure through various apertures on the several platforms, and illuminated its interior in the most brilliant and glorious manner—the more brilliant and grateful the nearer to its head—and those who inhabited up there, I discovered, had

additions to their garbs of gold and crimson and purple, that made their appearance very dazzling.

While I was wondering in what this upward progress terminated, and to what end it was that these inhabitants of the figure thus, as they became more refined and pure, ascended up and onward, I saw some of them enter within the tenement of its brain, and learned that when they became sufficiently perfected and developed, they became a part of the mighty intellect which thus ruled the world around and below them.

When the dark mortal turned away from the portal, I saw in him a feeling almost of despair at his ever becoming pure enough to enter, and of anxious inquiry as to what he should do to become worthy? Here, too, his kind and bright companions were ready to assist him. They led him to a little village or hamlet formed on a sloping bank, just behind the colossal figure, lying beautifully exposed to the rising sun, the mighty ocean, and the pleasant landscape between; and at the same time, the landscape to the west, including the dark inclosure within those gloomy walls, was partially hidden from view by the eminence on which the figure stood. He was given to understand that this pleasant hamlet of cottages and workshops and grateful gardens had been established by those good spirits as a probationary residence for such of the inhabitants of the dark inclosure as had evinced a desire to abandon their gloom and revel in the light of that mighty intellect, and that here he must work out his own salvation; that it would not come to him as a gratuity, but must be earned by his own industry; that though his weakness might at times be strengthened by kind friends, and his despondency often be cheered from above, yet the great end of his redemption could be achieved only by himself.

With these instructions they conducted him to a cottage poorly furnished, and surrounded by a garden much neglected, thus showing him that there was something for him to do at once. But, more than that, he was soon

called upon to discharge a duty, which he was told always devolved on the newest comer, and that was to take care of the sick. He entered upon the duty with alacrity, and at the farther end of the village he found a sick man, whom he attended kindly and faithfully, until he could find nothing more to do there. He was not very expert at the task, for it was evident, however kind might have been his feelings by nature, he had never given much attention to individual cases of suffering. He had rather generalized, and his active mind seemed never content unless it was in pursuit of some new object. As soon, therefore, as he had made his suffering fellow comfortable, instead of sitting down by his bedside and watching patiently as a more experienced nurse would have done, he went out into the village to see if he could not find something to do more profitable to the happiness of its inhabitants, than wasting time as he termed it, by a sick-bed.

As he passed through the hamlet, looking into the different houses, shops, and gardens, it was very evident that he was a man of great rapidity and clearness of perception, and of tremendous energy, for he formed many plans for improvement, that involved much labor, and thought, and patient industry. He began to feel proud of his power of rendering service to his new place of abode, and of signaling his entrance to it, to its inhabitants.

While pleasing himself with these thoughts, and wandering on, with more pride than humility, he came to a part of the village where a break in the sloping bank gave him a partial view of the country whence he had come. He saw a part of the dark inclosure in the distance, with the gloomy mist above it, resting like the shroud of the dead on its cold breast, and he recoiled in horror at the sight. A recollection of the life he had spent swelled up in his mind with fearful force, and overwhelmed him with a realizing sense of what he had been, and how unworthy he was to serve, much less to direct, even in that half-redeemed hamlet.

Shuddering at the thought of the past, and despairing of the future, he rushed to his lonely cot, and there, throwing himself upon a wooden pallet, gave vent to the strong yet silent agony of his mind, for inexpressibly bitter though it was, and shaking his manly form like an aspen leaf, yet his pride would not permit a groan to issue that could make his remorse known to others. But those shining ones were nearer to him than he imagined, their kind and watchful care was more than he knew of. To them his emotion was known, and they clustered around his cot to cheer and encourage him. One only of them entered, and it was she who had even in the evil past kept alive in him some of the saving instincts of his nature, and who had been dearer to him than all else besides, ere impelled by the fate which conducted her to purer regions she had left him alone in his gloom. She gently seated herself by his side, and in an old accustomed tone of fondness and heartfelt sympathy wooed him from his dark despondency. The deep bitterness of his despair was soothed, he became more gentle in his struggle with himself, his tears flowed more tenderly, he raised himself up and attempted to throw himself into her arms. But, alas! he felt that he was all too gross to clasp her, whose presence he was yet so very, very conscious of; and instead of that indomitable pride, which but a little while before had shaken his frame to its inmost recesses, he felt stealing upon him a sense of deep humility, which bowed him to the earth while it pointed him to heaven. He suffered her to lead him to the door of his cot, where, affectionately leaning upon his shoulder, and surrounded, though unconsciously to himself, by many, very many, as bright and gentle as she was, she pointed out to him the beauties of the scene around him, which he might still enjoy, and how wide was the field in which he might yet be useful in serving his fellows, and in purifying his own grossness.

When, at length, her soft pleadings had calmed the turbulence of his soul, and shed abroad upon it a holy repose,

Wife
see 1. 54

she left him and ascended to her own bright mansions above, with a countenance beaming with affection, and pointing still higher up. And the picture closed upon my view, leaving him standing by that earthly cot, and surrounded only by earthly objects, but with all his aspirations centred upon that brightness which he hoped that yet even he might make himself worthy to enjoy.

Section Thirty-one.

Thursday, June 2d, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, only two of the circle, the Doctor and Mr. Warren, were present. The others were absent from illness. The Doctor was influenced, and the following was written :

I REGRET that any of the members of the circle are absent to-night, as nothing so much retards the full harmony of spirit-intercourse (especially when the object is of grave import) as any difference in the magnetic current. I can not even myself imagine what keeps Mrs. D., as, expecting certainly to meet her, I have made no inquiries. But even without the absent ones, let us feel that where two or three are gathered together with pure desire for knowledge and truth, the doors shall be opened, and the light they seek shall be poured into their hearts in streaming floods. I therefore greet you, the present, and those absent, with heartfelt affection, and charge you that you be true, be firm, be consistent, be self-denying, bearing and forbearing, and loving all.

SWEEDENBORG.

If we reason from nature in reference to the soul, we find

our researches embrace many apparently incongruous departments; and yet all so intimately connected, so admirably proportioned, that the direct conclusion must be that the soul is distinct, and manifests its individuality even when identified with the body.

Every part of the human body has its constituent, and although the whole organism is composed of a few leading substances, yet the various textures, membranes, etc., differ in their construction, in the relative proportions of these agents, and are unlike one another. But this is of small moment when the inquiry is extended farther. Thus no particle of matter can be lost. The smallest grain or atom resolves itself into its proper connection, and is incorporated into some organic body, after having been perhaps decomposed, and to all appearance destroyed. This idea, though universally acknowledged, is not viewed with that interest its importance demands.

Now nature is the same in the spirit-world as on earth, and if we reasoned *ad rem* or *a priori*, as we can not conceive of spirit-manifestation separate from matter (for neither God, nor the spirits emanating from him, have ever exhibited their peculiar attributes unconnected with tangible substance), we are irresistibly led to ask, why should not the soul, after its separation from organic matter on earth, live or exist in connection with matter in some form in the world to which it goes? What more natural to the reason than this question? When the mind attempts to separate the spirit from matter, it has no just conception of spirit. Therefore we can not invest the Creator with form or personality. What sort of person would that God be if the form depended upon the idea of man? The form would resemble that of man, as he is supposed to be the image of the Being who created him. There is no point from which an idea can be formed; and if with all the various attributes with which the Creator is invested there is but one point from which any resemblance could be traced, how utterly does the mind fail in carrying out this connection

other than through the whole of God's manifestations of himself through his works! But the condition of matter necessary for such an amalgamation must be unknown to us as well as to you, for if the identification of spirit with matter were unfolded to your minds, the whole mystery of the Great First Cause would be understood. Are we prepared for this revelation? The thought is limited by the objects from which impressions are received. It is this fact which has contributed so much to create in some minds the idea of a material heaven, in which a God resides, who is so much like man, that he is subject to all the passions, feelings, and desires of his earthly nature; and it is this limited comprehension of what God is, and what the true destiny of the spirit is, that has filled the world with error, and has produced so many narrow prejudices among men, and built up a church on a foundation of opinion instead of fact and truth.

It is not strange, therefore, that with the descriptions of the material body after death, and of the spirit-world, too, your ideas should be confused as to what the nature of the spirit-body is after the decease of the form on earth. The account which has been given you of the passage of the spirit into the body prepared for it, just after it has passed from life to the spheres, must seem unnatural. I doubt not it is, for the reasons given above, that you can not reconcile any other action of Nature's laws than that to which you have been accustomed. And I am conscious that, until the time shall have arrived when the spirit-communion will be more tangible than at present, your views must be limited and your conclusions complex.

I have made these remarks for you, Mr. W., as your mind has been much interested in the consideration of this part of our teachings; and you have not been entirely satisfied with my explanations.

Neither do I wish to have you or our other friends receive as truth that which they can not understand. But if for a moment we consider this subject, we shall be sur-

prised at the ease with which the mind can be relieved of its strongest objections, when the influences of natural laws are permitted their full operation, limited by no narrow prejudice, circumscribed by no sect or doctrine. Thus, why should vitality or life exist in every thing God has made? Why should the barren soil of the arid desert, when removed from its original locality, be made to produce vegetation as well as that which has been cultivated for years? Take the soil from earth's center, and bring it to the surface, and it will germinate vegetation in some form as soon as it feels the light and heat. The hardest rock, when decomposed, will bring forth trees and flowers as abundantly as the most prolific soil. No matter what the substance, and no matter in what form or combination, it is teeming with life, and under some circumstance or other will manifest its ability to support or give birth to life.

Now, were the power of God exhibited only on this little ball, we might with reason say, after this earth there can be no other. All things but the soul cease here. But at the same time there is and must be a continual resurrection of matter. There is not, nor can there be, any cessation in the continual round of birth, life, decay, and resurrection, even on your earth.

But suppose it were so, does this alter the workings of God's laws in other spheres? And if, after all our struggles, the fact is proved that no matter is lost on earth, does it not prove that there is a necessity for the soul's combination with matter in some form, even after it has left the earth?

Here a pause in the writing having ensued, Mr. Warren remarked, in reference to a matter previously agitated, that it would imply the performance of perpetual miracle, if, when the spirit left the material body, there must be created for it a new body or spiritual form properly corresponding to its nature; while if, by the same inherent power, the spirit clothed itself with a form, or had one already generated within the material body, there would be no miracle; whereupon Dr. Dexter's hand was influenced, and the following was written:

I believe I said "the soul entered the body prepared for

it." The manner in which this took place I could not explain, for the spirits could not see the transformation. The body, however, is ready for the spirit, and it is, or may be, that the soul after leaving the earth generates its own form. But until I have entered the higher spheres I can not give you a just explanation of this.

My remarks have been more in explanation than in continuation to-night, as the circle was small; and I thought it best to be rather desultory than to pursue our regular subject.

At our next meeting I will continue my description of life in the spheres.

With my best affections for the absent, both the Judge and Mrs. D., I bid you good-night. SWEEDENBORG.

Section Thirty-two.

PART FIRST.

Saturday, June 4th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and I alone being present, it was written:

ONE of the hardest tasks in this our sphere of material action, is the bringing up for trial and judgment all the motives, feelings, and incentives of the heart before the stern governor of the mind, Reason, and hearing all the arguments, both for and against, on the course of conduct we have pursued relative to ourselves and others.

The difficulty lies not so much in the analyzing of motive and feeling, or in the full display of thought or passion;

but the task is indeed one of trouble, after we have heard all that can be said, in deciding justly, sincerely, and without deceiving ourselves. The man, the true man examines himself, and avows to himself the wrong he may have committed against his own nature; and not only will he bring his secret thoughts to judgment, but he will, Roman-like, sacrifice his most cherished desires, his earnest and heartfelt wishes, his carefully-concerted plans, to the requirements of duty, of love, and to the absolute demands of that law which bids us live that we may confer some good on our fellow-beings, and that we maintain a character which may not be INJURED BY DEATH.

What more noble attribute of our nature than the courage to do right, the fearlessness of truth, crucifying to the obligations which it imposes, all selfishness, all hypocrisy, every principle which militates against the advance of the soul!

The mere recognition of wrong is as much the ability of a wise man as that of a fool, and *vice versa*; but he who is indeed wise shrinks not, when that recognition teaches him conviction. The fool stumbles at the threshold of light. He shuts his eyes to the picture that light affords of the true properties of his mind. By its low desires, its cunning devices, its unhallowed pleasures, he is ever incited to delay all self-examination, and to flatter himself that in his disguise there can be no detection.

Alas! that that nature which is bound to progress by its own origin, which claims connection with God, ever should pervert the bright properties which that origin has conferred, from its upward progression, to a consort with things of earth, to a union of matter without the spirit.

But joy, unspeakable joy, when true to its relationship with eternity, true to its truth and integrity, true to the innate promptings, the soul claims to be heard against even itself, and boldly chastises when wrong has been done; when, conscious that its errors have been of its own choice, it applies, without shrinking, the just deserts which reason demands.

How glorious that man's destiny ! He leaves behind the errors of time, and boldly pushing forward through the untried future, he plants his standard on the very outward wall of eternity, and here he makes his stand ; here he calls around him all the aid that position furnishes, and he leaves the traces of his progress in his errors, the doings, the actions sacrificed to truth, which he scatters in the pathway which has led to this goal.

BACON.

The Doctor expressing his admiration of that teaching, I asked him to wait a minute, for I supposed there was some personal application of the lesson intended.

When it was written :

No. No personal application to you or the Doctor, for the heart that has applied the remedy to its own sufferings needs not to be told that the operation was painful.

In our intimacy with the world, the foregoing general aphorisms may pertinently apply ; but it is when those feelings of our nature, the finer susceptibilities of the soul made manifest in the tender threads of affection, and in the emotions which attract the gushing response from other hearts ; when the soul, assuming as its own its birthright of love, claims the prerogative of its bestowal on that heart which is congenial with its own ; when casting from it all the trammels of conventionalism, it bids the spirit seek its affinity in the very spirit of another, that the trial surpasses the agony of all material pain.

The soul in agony ! The soul crucified on its own affections ! Oh ! this indeed is the exquisite misery of the wounded spirit ! Who hath power to heal ?

Who hath power to heal ? The very love which it subdued, the very affection which it has called back to its heart, like a tired dove, shall be to it like a well of living water springing up to an eternal life, refreshing, invigorating, restoring.

This lesson is finished.

Now, dear Judge, if you feel able for a few moments,

we will try to impress you with a vision relative to some teaching affecting the Doctor.

I then lay down on my sofa, and shutting out, as usual, external objects, by tying a handkerchief over my eyes, I received the vision which I have described in the paper of this date.

At a particular part of it, from the length of the pause, I supposed it was done, and arose from my recumbent posture, and asked if I had described it right?

It was written in answer:

Yes; but the vision is not yet ended. Your head is better [all the evening I had been suffering with a headache]; lie still a little longer. There is something personal to the Doctor.

I then lay down again, and the vision went on as far as I have recorded. Then it was written:

We can not bring the matters concerning the Doctor before you, but we will try again some other time. Write out the vision as a general teaching, but when you feel better we will impress you again.

PART SECOND.

June 4th, 1853.

VISION.

THE scene which opened to me was an old man bent over with age, walking slowly, supported by his cane, along a pleasant path, lined on his right by green shrubbery. He came in view from the extreme right. The general scene was dark, but he was enveloped in a bright silver light, which seemed to come from above, behind him, and shot down upon and around him, like the shooting rays of the northern lights in their most playful mood. As he advanced, the light followed him, illuminated the scene all around

him, and left it still bright behind him, though all else was dark and gloomy.

I observed, as he advanced, he became more erect in his carriage, and more alert and active in his movements. He occasionally uplifted his cane with a joyous gesture, as if saying to himself, "Why! I'm a boy again."

He occasionally paused and looked intently upon the ground, stirring up something with his cane. It seemed to me that he was examining the mineral and vegetable productions that lay in his path.

The light accompanied him still, and a little preceded him, though not much. So that it was only when he had advanced nearly opposite to it, that I discovered standing close by the path in which he was moving what seemed to be a somewhat spacious Doric temple, not open, and with columns all around, as of old, but closed at the sides like a modern church, and with a Doric colonnade in front, with some fifteen or twenty steps ascending to its entrance, and extending the whole front of the building.

The old gentleman was so intent on examining what was in the path, that he did not discover this building until he had got directly up to it. He then stopped and looked up at it, and examined its exterior carefully. He finally concluded he would enter it, and as he began to ascend, he discovered, what I had already noticed, that the light which accompanied him had paled somewhat, and he began to doubt whether there was enough of it to enable him to explore satisfactorily the interior of that building. Just at this moment, a cloud of golden light came out of that part of the heavens whence the silver light had issued, and passed along the path which the old man had trod, marking its course very distinctly, like as we have often seen a summer shower fleeting amid the sunshine o'er the dusty fields. It moved along until it came opposite to where the old man had turned to ascend the steps, then it also turned, followed him, and completely enveloped him, mingling and forming one with the silver light. As soon as he had as-

cended the steps till he had attained the last platform, a streak of pale-blue light, very clear and grateful to the eye, shot suddenly out from that part of the heavens whence the other light had come, and streamed with inconceivable rapidity upon his person, and mingled also with the other lights. Thus that old man was bathed in brilliant light, and as he entered that dark building, its interior was lighted up by the emanations from his person. I observed that it was divided into pews like a modern church, had its chancel, and its altar at one end, and its gallery, and splendid organ at the other. He advanced slowly up the middle aisle, until he approached the chancel, when he stopped and looked back, and took in a view of the whole interior. It had no light in it except what issued from him, and even then it was somber and gloomy. As he thus stood, I noticed, though he did not, that one of his feet was standing on the end of a monumental slab, inserted into the floor, just at the end of the middle aisle, in front of the chancel. Ere long I saw that end begin to sink under his foot, and I started, lest he might be precipitated into the vault; but he felt the motion, withdrew his foot, and looked intently down to see what was meant. The slab moved slowly down at one end and up at the other, as if turning on a pivot, until it stood upright, and exposed a full entrance below. As yet I could see nothing there, for all was dark, and the light from the old man did not penetrate its obscurity.

While I was wondering what all this meant, I heard a loud noise at the entrance to the church, and looked up to see the cause. I saw a crowd of ignorant, uneducated, but well-intentioned bores rushing in with a great cry. They had known that old man for a long time, as a physician residing in the neighborhood. He had a large family, and was believed to very skillful, yet he had never seemed to care about accumulating wealth. He had seemed to care more for others than for himself. This had seemed strange to them, as had a great deal of, to them, very mys-

terious and out-of-the way learning, which he had gathered up ;

Times and tides he could presee,
And e'en, the story ran, he could guage.

When they saw him enter that church alone, and attended by that strange light, they fancied that he was intending to play some necromancy upon their dearly loved feudal lord, who had erected that church, and after a disease which had carried him off suddenly, had been buried beneath its floor and so they rushed furiously forward to prevent him. As they approached him with all their clamor, he withdrew his gaze from the vault, and calmly looked at them. It seemed as if there was something in his look, or in the light which issued from him, that overawed them, for they paused, and, huddling close together, stood looking on him in stupid wonder, as if incapable of either advancing or retreating. He spoke contemptuously to them : " Fools ! think you that I come unlawfully to desecrate the grave, attended by a light that heralds my approach to all the world ? " and then turned his gaze down into the vault again.

At this moment the light from him illumined the interior of the vault to him and to me, and I saw the corpse of a man lying there, enshrouded in his grave-clothes. He looked fresh, as if only recently buried there, yet the marble slab, I had observed, was much worn, as if it had been there some time.

The savant, as he looked upon the corpse, seemed to say to himself, " He surely is not dead. It is a pity so good a master and so kind a benefactor to all around him should be cut off in the prime of life, to make way for a hard and selfish and brutal tyrant, who sows misery and depression broadcast all around him. I can save him yet, and I will. " He then stood steadily and calmly looking at the corpse for a few moments, seeming to me to be strongly willing the apparent dead to awake. Soon the corpse began to show signs of life. It opened its eyes, looked around to see

where it was, and catching a glimpse of the savant, whom it seemed to recognize, arose to a sitting posture, and gazed intently upon him. The old man reached down to it one end of his cane, which was seized by it, and then with ease raised it up through the entrance of the vault, until it stood erect on the floor of the church by his side. He was a tall, majestic-looking man, of about middle age, and he looked down upon the little old man by his side, with feelings of admiration at his skill, and gratitude for the benefit of his resurrection. The savant seemed to expect the door of the vault to close, but as it did not, he looked back to see why, and the light from him shone upon the corpse of a lovely child of about two years old, the son, it seemed, of the other, and which I had not before observed. He beckoned to it, and it floated up, as it were, through the entrance of the vault, into the arms of its father, and there nestled closely, looking on the good old man with childish wonder and much affection.

The marble slab then closed gently over the vault, and the old man turned to leave the church with his rescued companions. The crowd, which had stood there during the whole time in silent wonder, opened a passage for them. He turned from them with a look of compassion, and passed down one of the side aisles, and so out behind them. They had not perceived that for the light by which they saw they were indebted to him, until now they found themselves, by his withdrawal, in profound darkness. Their ignorant fears were aroused to a fearful pitch, and they shivered in very fright.

I remained in the church to note them, and I perceived that the good old man passed along the outside of the building, toward its rear, and as he passed, the light from him shot into one after the other of the windows, as from a bright lantern carried by in the night-time, casting a fitful and startling radiance around those terrified rustics, whose superstitious alarm it most fearfully augmented.

I left the building and hastily followed him, and saw

him and his companions enter the porter's lodge of some nobleman's extensive grounds. Its inmates were the aged porter, his wife and daughter, who were startled at the strange sight that was before them. The old man quieted their alarm, by assuring them that it was their good master and his son restored to them, and they must get them some clothes. How that was done I did not observe, for I was then learning that the man who had thus been rescued, had once been the lord of that mansion and those grounds, a man of great power and wealth, with very many persons under and dependent upon him, and that he had been one of very enlarged benevolence, devoting all his energies to the benefit of his fellow-creatures: That he had lost his wife, and had only one son, in whom was centred the hope that the beneficence of the father would descend down the stream of time. That he had an unworthy relative, who, anxious to succeed to his wealth and power, had administered poison to both father and son, and that so secretly as to escape all suspicion, and then had entered upon the estate, where he had played the brutal tyrant, heedful only of gratifying his own passions, and regardless of his duty alike to God and to man. So that the restoration of the former lord was indeed a wide-spread blessing.

In the mean time, the dresses of the dead-alive had been changed. I did not notice the garb of the father. Of the child I did. He wore a little purple-colored velvet cap, embroidered with golden cord, and with a feather in it. He had jacket and trousers of like material, and similarly ornamented. And with his golden-colored hair, bright blue eyes, clear complexion, and soft and pensive countenance, he was a lovely object to look upon.

They passed out of the porter's lodge by a side door into the lawn. They had scarcely arrived there, before the crowd in the church, having awakened from their paralyzed stupor, rushed out of the building, and tore madly along toward the park gates, bellowing in their rage. They forced an entrance, and observing no other object, they

seized upon the good old man, and in an instant tore him to pieces, staining with his life-blood the soil that was that moment bearing testimony to the great good he had done.

So rapid had been the atrocious deed, that that noble lord had not had time to interfere, nor if he had had, would it have availed with them in their insensate blindness. But when the fearful deed was done, then came reflection, though, alas! too late to save—and they stood appalled at their own action. Sternly then did that noble lord reprove them. “See,” he cried, “how in your madness you have destroyed your benefactor and mine, who had no purpose in what he did but the welfare of others. And now what atonement can you make for the innocent blood you have shed, and which cries to Heaven from the ground on which you stand?”

They fell on their knees before him, and implored his forgiveness. They proffered to gather together the dismembered limbs, and give them honorable burial; but he forbade their touching them, and he even bade them cast off their shoes that were stained by his blood, as being too holy to be defiled by their contamination.

While these things were going on near the entrance, the tyrannical usurper, from his distant mansion, had discovered the disturbance near his park gates. He knew not the cause; but, being as cowardly as he was cruel, he imagined that it was his oppressed tenants who had at length, as had often been threatened, risen against his harsh domination, and were approaching to wreak their vengeance on him. He instantly called together his whole household of attendants, and sent them down, to the number of some fifty, to resist the invaders. Most of them had been servants of the former lord, though the usurper had introduced a few of his own creatures among them. As they ran toward the crowd, their former master turned to them, so that they saw him, and they instantly recognized that he lived again. They paused, and with almost one voice tendered him a welcome back. He directed them to drive that crowd of

now repentant homicides off from the grounds. They did so. He then set a few of them to watch the remains of the good old man, and, accompanied by the others, turned to go toward his mansion. In the mean time the creatures of the usurper had rushed back to him with the startling news, that the former lord was restored, and he and they instantly fled for safety. He entered again his former habitation, his mind solely intent on what he should do in reference to the sad event which had marked his restoration. He debated in his mind whether he should inclose and render sacred the spot where the homicide was committed, and there erect a monument, or gather the remains together, and directly in front of his mansion, on his lawn, erect it.

He, however, dispatched messengers for the old man's family, now by his death reduced to want, and brought them to his own residence, and there to his widowed wife he said, "You are my mother;" to his children, "You are my brothers and sisters. Henceforth be this your home, and share with me all that Providence has bestowed." The eldest daughter, who had been exquisitely educated by her highly intellectual father, and who shared with him his attainments and his benevolence, he entreated to be his companion and the mother of his child.

Thus though a few years of a life nearly spent were cruelly cut off, yet by his self-sacrifice that old man had restored goodness and happiness where cruelty and misery had reigned, had indeed secured their continuance from generation to generation, and caused them to flow far, far down the current of time, perpetuating his own memory in the good he had done long after the other actors in the scene had passed away and been forgotten.

Section Thirty-three.

Sunday, June 5th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, the circle all being present, a manifestation was first made by a new spirit, and then it was written :

MY DEAR FRIENDS :

The little exhibition just now, was made by the Judge's particular friend, I. T. Hopper, who is here, and desired to say some things, but failed, and as I could not wait, has retired, leaving his regards to all. I do not wish the Doctor to permit the promiscuous use of his arm by all and any spirits who choose, and would suggest that he be particular in throwing off the influence when he can not determine the spirit.

I am glad to meet you all, my friends, to-night. When you are older than you now are, or when even a year or two shall pass, you will look back on these re-unions for spirit-instruction with pleasure, and yet pain. Cherish them while they last. The opportunity afforded you has not before been vouchsafed to mortal man. Love one another, and be true, be holy ; tame your earthly feelings toward one another, and look forward to the time when together in the world of spirits you will wander, hand in hand, through its bright regions, seeking love and truth in every exploration. I greet you to-night in the name of God.

SWEEDENBORG.

Spirits, as I have before remarked, differ but little from man, except in the sublimation of their organism and in the stronger exercise of the attributes of their minds. Thus their judgment, on matters connected with their life, is more matured, and the grand characteristics of their minds are

more developed. Their feelings and desires are more intense than man's, and they aspire higher than man, for they are not satisfied with the pleasures and joys of one sphere, but are continually striving to enter the sphere above. After the spirit has arrived at the spot where his affinities have directed him, he comes under the law pertaining to the whole, although he enters a community or neighborhood. He is provided with a place of residence, and all things necessary to make that residence comfortable. But he is required to render such services, common to all, as will make the labor of the whole more equally divided; but only a very small portion of his time is devoted to this purpose.

The usual necessities of organic nature are always attended to, and then the whole time is devoted to the acquisition of knowledge in some form, or in developing some fact pertinent to their existence, or in fulfilling some command or rather demand from some other, or in learning some truth, or in subduing some unlicensed desire, or in contributing, by absolute effort and self-denial, to the happiness of some one of the spirits of their neighborhood or sphere.

The manner of instruction differs in different spheres; but the most usual manner is, to select some person properly qualified and every way worthy, both in mind, desire, and education, belonging to the neighborhood, to lecture on some topic or subject which he selects for that object.

Thus, while imparting instruction, he blends reproof or advice, or teaches duty, or inculcates lessons of morality and truth.

The early part of the day is usually passed in studying or hearing instruction, and in the performance of the ordinary duties incident to condition or circumstance; but the after-part of the day is occupied in visiting friends in the spheres, or friends on earth.

It is not always, however, that all the spirits composing a neighborhood leave at the same time; but those whose duties are well done for the day, leave and visit according

to their pleasure. Now, we eat, and drink, and sleep, but these absolute necessities of organic life are not performed in the same way as on earth; that is, the fact of eating is merely to support matter, and when there is but little matter, or matter refined, it requires but very little food to support it. When the spirit has ascended to the higher spheres, it casts off, as a garment, the grosser part of its body, and, consequently, the spirit distinct is the governing principle of its existence. I should say that the spirit is the greater proportion of the two; thus the spirit-necessities are paramount, and sometimes such spirits scarcely eat once a week, and only when the demands of the material part of their combination require support from food. If the spirit has pain, it arises from some violation of the organic part of its body; and as there is less of matter, there is less of pain.

Sleep is necessary only so far as the material portion requires it, and as the spirit develops, there is less and less required. Do you suppose God sleeps? Then if you can imagine mind almost entirely divested of matter, you can comprehend what I mean. When I say that spirit-connection with matter is under the laws regulating matter, you must also understand me to say that the matter is divested of a portion of its grossness; and the nearer to earth spirits reside, the more are they influenced by causes affecting matter belonging to earth. This does not apply to progressed spirits residing on or near the earth.

I never saw a spirit sick in body, but I have seen spirits suffering from a kind of pain. They hunger, they thirst, but only as they are mixed up with matter in a greater or less proportion. And the farther they advance, the more refined they become.

Their obligations and dealings are also governed by this law, and they lose selfishness as they progress, until at last they manifest only that principle of their spirit-nature which compels them to love one another.

Mr. Warren asked a question, to which it was answered:

They have fire, I am told, in the dark spheres ; but even those spirits residing near the earth require no fire, as the climate they live in is exactly adapted to the condition of their organization, and having but comparatively little of matter to protect, they feel none of the changes of climate, which are very rare. There is no money, and the land is subdivided into communities or neighborhoods, and in them the land is also again laid out in parcels for each to till for the benefit of all. The government is patriarchal, and the head of a sphere is a spirit invisible, who communicates his wishes to those higher spirits by absolute oral statements, or by impression.

At this moment the Doctor was called to see a sick woman in the neighborhood, who was indeed dead from apoplexy before his arrival.

On his return, it was further written, as follows :

Dear Doctor, I went with you to visit that female who is dead, and I will give you an account of her spirit, which left her body just as you and I entered the room. Not a spirit belonging to her, except some of her grandchildren attending their mother, was there ; and they were surprised at the sudden ushering in of their grandmother to their sphere. The spirit when it left the body was, to my eye, clothed in its material garb, peculiar to this sphere, and seemed to float by its own specific weight in the air, directly over the corpse. While you were in the room, it still remained directly over the body, occasionally opening its eyes, and gazing vacantly around, as if it were in a dream, and could not realize where it was. I saw no preparation, and even the spirits who were in the room appeared surprised at the abrupt entrance of her spirit, and could not, therefore, have had time to have prepared any other body than the one it possessed when I first saw it, which it had assumed, or generated, independent of them. When you left the house it had not recovered its consciousness, and probably, even now, it remains precisely as we left it, just above its mortal body.

The children are much affected, as their grandmother was

the whole reliance of their mother, and on her she depended for every thing ; this gave the children pain, as they knew their mother's weakness of mind, that she is away from home, and that she must and will suffer from her loss ; but they have not yet spoken to their grandmother, neither will they, until she arouses to a perfect consciousness of her situation, and then they will approach her.

I have mentioned these things that you might have, as it were, an example directly under observation, and that the preliminary acts being under your eye, you might be able to follow the spirit to this world. And also, as from the suddenness of death, the uniting or passage of the spirit from a body of entire matter to one of refined matter, might be distinctly made known.

The spheres are scattered through all space, and under an imperative law, too. I will give you a teaching on this subject soon. But it is too late to-night, and Mrs. D. must retire.

They never die ; but, as they progress they leave their gross part from sphere to sphere, and are never entirely divested of matter, even when they arrive at those spheres where the spirit of God is made manifest.

The change is progression, and progressive, and they never die but once, though the last change from the spheres to the bright abodes is more of a change than the passage from sphere to sphere. But the change is as they go along. If they have not changed, how could they enter heaven, or the bright abodes ?

Section Thirty-four.

Tuesday, June 7th, 1853.

In my library, when Dr. Dexter and I alone were present, it was written :

WHEN the Doctor first came in, you read him some extracts from a work purporting to be a life of Lord Chancellor Bacon. There were some traits true and others not so, evidencing a want of just appreciation of the true character of the man as he was, in the full exercise of his mind, and in the pride of that mind and strength.

I believe I had ever, from my earliest youth, a strong desire to understand not only the laws of nature, but the application of those laws to every condition of life, matter, and man.

This feeling was a leading feature of my mind ; and I think you will find, on examination of my decisions, or charges, or essays, or my writings of any kind, that the conclusions or processes of reasoning, or the points of argument, were all predicated on the idea, that man, possessing a mind capable of comparing and investigating, should be permitted the full and free exercise of the tendencies (proper and just) of his intellect, without any impediment by enactment, or prejudice, or zeal.

That I erred as a man, I can not deny ; that I was tainted with the habits and customs of time and society, I honestly admit ; but that I had not at heart the advancement of my race, that I did not labor for its good, and that I did not forestall both age, education, and public opinion, I proclaim to be a libel on my true character and motives, as also a base attempt to shield the wrong others conceived and

executed, by ascribing to me that of which I was not and could not have been guilty. That I was ardent, enthusiastic, and persistent, is true; that I contributed much to the enlightenment of my country, and advanced her in the estimation of the learned and good of all nations, is likewise true.

That I had a proper idea of what belonged to my position, and out of that position, as well as in it, gathered round me the highest intellects of the age, and reduced the unsettled vagaries of speculation and false practice to a system of pertinent sense, I think no one will deny. But I was beset by trials, and temptations, and seducements, to which I may at times have listened and yielded. But, too, the tendencies of my soul, even when plunged into all the intricacies of legal perplexity and all the false mysteries and pseudo-profundity of diplomacy, were upward, forward, and for good. The good I have done speaks for itself—it will live forever; the evil to which I was accessory is, perhaps, repented of, and may ere this have been swallowed up in my advance and progression. At least, this hope has comforted me, and I may not be permitted to doubt. BACON.

I then remarked: How closely it must be that I had been watched by them; for it seemed as if every thought, however secret I might have deemed it to be, was known to them, and I desired to know if others had been watched as close?

It was answered:

Perhaps few need watching as much; for errant tendencies require reasonable stringencies to keep them within limits. Oh, Judge, if you are watched, it is the vigils of love that are seeking your welfare, and striving to guide you straight to the high goal to which life, truth, and love impel you! Yes, here is the Doctor, he is kept and guided by a curbed bit.

Yes, it has been a special, direct, and constant watching of your mind, in its thought, and in the thought's action.

I assure you that the object before you is a high and

glorious, and a purely good and holy one. If the redemption of man from error, if the teaching of truth and knowledge is not a purpose worthy to live for, yes, and to die for, then you can well understand that watching would be of no account; but if it be so, then to watch you both is to make you like ourselves and of ourselves. When I say that you feel our care and influence; I do no more than justice to your intellect; and when you can stand on the very verge of time and look back on your path through the world, you will then see how your footsteps have been led, how your way has been directed, and more fully appreciate what we have done for you together.

Section Thirty-five.

Monday, June 6th, 1853.

This evening, at my supper table, I read to Dr. Dexter the annexed letter from Gov. Tallmadge, which I had received this morning, and after we had retired to my library we had a desultory communication, of which I record some parts.

The first part that was written was entirely personal, and I do not record it, though the original MS. is preserved.

I now remarked that I thought a good stopping-place for the first volume might soon be obtained. It was written :

In regard to the book, enough has been written for the first volume, and we shall leave to you and the Doctor the arrangement of every thing, with our corrections only. You will leave out what you wish, and arrange all matter as in your judgment will produce the greatest effect. The volume had better close here, and we had better, as soon as your health will permit, correct the whole (or what remains), and then proceed to the publication.

Then, without further preface, this letter to Gov. Tallmadge was written out:

DEAR GOVERNOR:

One great satisfaction to a spiritually interested mind is the ascertaining of statements made of future events, to be true. It not only strengthens faith and elicits interest, but it opens to your mind the knowledge that there are spirits specially interested in your affairs, who look at all the circumstances surrounding you, and maturely investigate and decide for your benefit or otherwise. Now, we do not pretend to prescience, but we do avow our power to combine all the workings of mind and matter which we behold under different and more favorable circumstances than yourself, and bring the influences to bear on the present or future condition of the one for whom the observations were made. We are no fortune-tellers, but we read events only by comparison. Thus those of your friends who love you, and who, when on earth, were active and prominent in the busy scenes of life, have specially collated opinions and feelings of your professed friends, and reading their very hearts, understood therefore what would be their probable action. We are, under this state of things, obliged to speak oracularly, and it may appear strange to some that we do so; but to instance men and fact might do injury, while to caution in the way we have done, would put you at once on the observation, and would also affect neither yourself nor the other parties.

I frequently see your friends, your son, Mr. C., and others whom you regard with respect and affection, and they desire me to say that they are watching you with interest and care, and will soon direct me to communicate through the Doctor some things which they wish you to know.

They ask me to say to you, that time is but an atom compared with the eternity of eternal truth, eternal trust, eternal progress, and however much your success here may gratify, your happiness hereafter will be in the ratio of your earnest desire to penetrate into the seeming mysteries

of the spirit-world, for in our teachings ye think ye have eternal life, and we know. BACON.

FOND DU LAC, WIS., May 28th.

My dear Sir—I received the "Spiritual Telegraph" containing my letters; they will be published next week in one of our papers here.

The work of reform is making rapid progress here. Mediums are being developed in all directions. Men of the highest intelligence are becoming convinced. *Chief-Justice Larrabee*, on his northern circuit, lately came across two mediums, investigated the subject, became an entire convert, and proclaims his belief openly.

I have not yet seen that Mrs. Whitman has published my letter; I suggested the "Tribune;" but if Greeley will not publish, I think I can get it published in the "Intelligencer."

I see, by a late number of the "Intelligencer," that the editors have determined to publish nothing more about spiritualism, except under the proper signature of the writer. I am glad of this; such a contest should no longer be carried on from "masked batteries."

How comes on the subject of the communications from Sweedenborg and Lord Bacon? * * * *

You will recollect the Chancellor's premonition to me about "false friends," and political treachery, etc., soon after I got home. Well, a man has just returned from Washington, who * * * He was the friend of M. Since his return he has come out against him, and also against me as being M.'s friend, although I take no particular part in politics. I have already seen enough to make true the Chancellor's prediction. I will communicate further, if there are further developments. Tell Dr. Dexter of this verification.

I shall be glad to hear from you, even if it be but a line. * * * Very truly, yours, N. P. TALLMADGE.

Hon. J. W. EDMONDS.

Section Thirty-six.

PART FIRST.

Thursday, June 9th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, all the circle being present, it was written:

It has been intimated by Lord Bacon that you might arrange our teachings as in your opinion would produce the greatest effect on the minds of the world. It is therefore proper for me to say here, that our direct teachings have ended until the publication of the first volume of our work, and that our meetings for the present will assume more of a personal character until the arranging of the work shall have been finished. Our meetings must be imperatively continued, and occasionally I shall bring with me a spirit from the highest sphere with which it is possible for man to have communication, and this and other spirits will aid us in the second volume of our work. Your duties, Judge, are now to commence, in short visions illustrating particular subjects before you, and an attempt will be made to make clairvoyant some of the circle, all this during the interim. Now I would suggest that our meetings be occupied with subjects interesting to all, and all bearing on the subjects before treated of, as also including personal feeling, teaching, etc. God bless you, and all good spirits attend you.

SWEEDENBORG.

I inquired where he would have the criticism of his teachings, at this circle or in my library, as we did with Lord Bacon's?

He answered:

At your library alone, as you will perceive it will be

best, etc. Let the time be occupied, and if there is any question prepared touching the teachings, let it occupy only a certain portion of the time, as we have an object to accomplish.

It was inquired whether he meant questioning this evening only, or during the critique?

It was answered:

It was arranged between Lord Bacon and myself that all questions pertaining to the work should be proposed at the critique, and therefore the remark. Only an evening or two should be occupied in this, as we wish to introduce new spirits and carry out our plan of influencing the circle, to show through visions absolute illustrations of what has been taught.

I remarked, You say "only an evening or two should be occupied in this." This what? Questioning or criticism?

It was answered:

Questioning. Your questions would be more properly on the correction of the text, as the revision would naturally suggest explanations and queries about the facts stated and opinions, in fact every thing belonging to the subject taught; therefore if any one has questions to propound, let him write them out and hand them in, and the answers can be read at the next meeting.

I am willing to answer any questions individually, but only briefly; the full answers are for publication.

Do you mean now?

Yes, and at other times also. It was not the intention to-night to answer questions, the desire of the spirits was to impress the Judge; there is a spirit here who wishes to impress his mind, and both Bacon and myself, and also Mrs. E., would be gratified if he would permit. The impression will be brief, but instructive, and afterward the spirit's name will be given.

I then began to receive the vision which is recorded in the accompanying paper. There was so much moving about in the room and in the

house, that it was at times comparatively weak and faint, and once in describing it—for I did so as it went along—I remarked I did not know that I had it right?

It was written:

That is the design; go on; you will see.

The vision went on, and coming, as I supposed, to a close, I said so. It was written:

For to-night; but it is not yet ended.

Then it was added:

It may be as well in our meetings that each person present suggests the leading feelings of his mind in reference to the influence of spirit-intercourse. It is often that erroneous ideas are imbibed from an incorrect reasoning; and impressions, frequently considered as the result of your own thoughts, are in truth the ideas of spirits, but being imperfectly mirrored on the mind, produce an incorrect result.

Any idea during the day, or any thought, or any advice, or, indeed, any thing of life, of the spheres, of truth, of love, we wish you to talk about and ask about, and we will try to answer and explain.

BACON.

We have nothing more to say to-night particularly, but we wish to meet at the next evening, and therefore want you to follow the suggestion made by Bacon. Good-night.

We want you to write the visions, and we will tell you what we want done with them all.

Then, after a pause, it was written:

Our Father, God, teach us thy law, teach us to know ourselves and thee; teach us that our nature begun here, will exist and progress through eternity; teach us that thy law, based on love, requires but the exercise of that love for its fulfillment.

Aid us in our efforts to feel, to know what is our strength, and teach us to love one another, as we are all from one source and thee.

PART SECOND.

VISION.

It was the same scene which I had witnessed the other evening, when the dark inclosure within those high walls was so prominent a part of the picture. Now, I perceived those walls had been demolished, but that was all the change there was in the scene, except an addition to it, which at once attracted my attention. It was this. On the summit of the hill, into the base of which those dark mortals had dug their deep caverns, and directly over them, so situated as to overlook the scene, a man was standing dressed in the garb of mortals. He was tall and dignified in his deportment. His countenance evinced much intellect, but had a stern, rather than a beneficent expression, a look rather of deep thought and anxiety, than of affection and joy. He was leaning with his right elbow on a white marble pedestal, which seemed prepared for a column which was yet to be placed upon it. His attitude was very easy and graceful. He was standing on one foot, the other leg bent across, resting on its toes, as if it was a position with which he was familiar. He was facing the east. At his feet was the dark inclosure, and before him was the landscape, which included the gigantic figure, the half-redeemed hamlet, and the ocean in the distance. The dark mist still hung over the inclosure, but did not reach to his feet, and he, therefore, stood above and unaffected by it. He was engaged intently looking through it, and occasionally an expression of sorrow would flit across his face, and then he would look abroad upon the ocean, as if he was expecting something.

My attention was by his proceedings pointed in the same direction, and at length I observed far in the distance the sails of some vessels. They approached rapidly. The sur-

face of the water was moving gently, not turbulently, and a fine "fresh breeze" was filling every sail. A greater number of vessels were constantly coming in sight, and there seemed to be a long and apparently endless line of them extending away down below the horizon. The foremost vessel made for the bay lying directly in front of the hamlet, followed by the others, as if they steered direct for that gigantic human figure. On the deck of that vessel was standing one who seemed to be the admiral of that fleet. His whole appearance was that of calm command. One would be glad to serve under him, so much confidence would at once be placed in his capacity and self-possession. He gave directions for his fleet to come to anchor, and one after another, as they entered the bay, furled their sails, until they crowded it full. The dark mortals under the gloomy mist did not notice the approach of this fleet. The man standing by the pedestal did, and his countenance lighted up with a lofty joy. The spirits inhabiting the gigantic figure did also, and they came out in great numbers, floating in the air, and walking on the earth around it, regarding it with great interest. The tenants of the little hamlet also were aware of its approach, and they huddled together in one corner of their village, wondering what it all portended. I wondered also, and was given to understand that it came at the instigation and by the procurement of the mortal who stood by the pedestal, laden with materials abundant and appropriate for ameliorating in every regard the condition of those dark mortals.

It seemed that I hovered for a moment over the fleet, so as to give me a full opportunity to see how it was laden and manned. They were people I saw of different and far distant nations, who had united in the one object of attempting to redeem those dark mortals, and I observed, too, that they were all of a lighter complexion, and with a joyful, cheerful expression of countenance.

Thus I had in my sight at the same moment, people of four different hues—the bright and shining inhabitants of

the gigantic figure, the light-complexioned crews of the fleet, the dark denizens of the inclosure, and the partially enlightened tenants of the little hamlet. It was progression exemplified.

I soon saw a boat put off from the admiral's ship, and land a single man on the beach. He made directly for the dark inclosure, merely exchanging a friendly nod with the spirits and men congregated near the figure. His way was rough. The rubbish which past ages had scattered there, made rugged and difficult even the approach of a messenger of peace and redemption. He at length entered amid the dark mortals and began to make his mission known. Those whom he first addressed suspended their work for a moment, and scowled upon him. The attention of others was soon attracted toward him, and they in turn suspended their employments, looking doubtfully and angrily at him. He endeavored to make them understand what efforts had been made to ameliorate their condition, but they seemed to care nothing for it, and began rather to entertain the idea that these new-comers had really in view to share with, or perhaps entirely rob them of, their expected treasures.

In the mean time, news of his arrival had passed down into the caverns, and the workmen there began to pour out and surround him with the same feelings of hostility and distrust, so that I began to fear they might assail him and tear him to pieces. But a new and quite an unexpected direction was given to their feelings. It seemed that wherever this messenger was among them, he lighted up and partially dispelled the dark mist which enveloped them. They discovered this, and were uneasy about it. Some of them looked up to see what it meant, and the mist had so far thinned away that they caught a glimpse of the man by the pedestal just above them. Those who first saw him called the attention of the others to him. They knew him well, for he had once been one of themselves; and his appearance, thus above them, excited in them the most fearful passions. The whole crowd became furiously agitated,

they abandoned at once all thought of the messenger, the fleet, or its purposes. They even forgot for a moment their own insatiate pursuit of their cherished treasures, and with one accord united in the cry, Down with him! down with him! Some of the more energetic among them threw themselves into the crowd, fanned their rage to a higher flame, and began to organize and direct the efforts to overthrow that single man. I observed now many females in the crowd, equally somber in look, and, if possible, more furious in passion. But it was not so easy for them to effect their purpose. They had first to ascend to his level, in order to reach him, and that could be done only by a desperate effort to climb the steep and ragged precipice between them, and which he had already surmounted.

In the mean time the messenger became alarmed, not for himself, but for that solitary mortal, who, he knew, had been instrumental in bringing to his fellow-mortals all these means of their amelioration, and he determined to hurry back to the ships to bring him aid.

But that calm and considerate admiral had not been, from his lofty deck, an inattentive observer of what was before him. He had already given orders for prompt aid, and with right good-will did his companions rush to the rescue. Boats were pushing off from every ship, laden with men. Other ships were still coming, in the far distance, and the bay was alive with boats plying with the shore and landing men. The rowers stretched to their oars, and many, in their zeal, leaped from the boats and waded to land through the surf, impatient of a moment's delay, and fearing they might be too late to rescue him who had thus periled all, that he might aid his fellow-mortals. I observed that by taking a path a little to the left, they avoided the inequalities of the surface over which their messenger had traveled, and by going a little round the inclosure [for I call it thus still for convenience, although the walls had been thrown down], they found a path which enabled them to ascend the hill on which the pedestal was with comparative ease

and rapidity. They hurried along that path singly and in groups, standing not upon the order of going, but going at once.

Meanwhile, the dark mortals in the inclosure had not been idle, but led on by some of the most energetic and determined among them, they had begun to clamber up the precipice with hot and furious haste, and some of the most active and daring among them had attained the summit, on the right hand, at the same time that some of the people from the boats had attained it on the left.

All this time the mortal by the pedestal had retained his position,

In strong integrity of soul
Uplifted, calmly stood and heard the waves
Of stormy folly breaking at his feet.

He had observed all that had taken place around and below him, and though all-uncertain whether relief would arrive in time to save him from the furious hate that was rapidly approaching him, he shrank not, he moved not, but with a stern composure gave way to the feelings of sorrow which their condition awakened in his heart.

The numbers who attained the summit on both sides of him momentarily increased, and I observed that those who came to sustain him began rapidly to outnumber the others; and I saw, too, that the tide of rescuers, reaching from the summit to the ocean's beach, was constantly augmented by others hurrying from ships already moored, and could be still farther increased, and apparently without limit, from the vessels that were still coming, while the number of the dark mortals was limited, and had no source whence to recruit any increase.

There was a moment's pause, while the rear of the assailants were struggling up the bank to join their leaders, and during it, the mortal who stood by the pedestal, and all immediately around him, were lighted up in a marvelous manner. The light from behind the mountains illuminated

him most brilliantly, by a mingled radiance of gold-and-silver hue; at the same time the gigantic image, surrounded by innumerable hosts of shining ones, who took no part in the transactions, except as spectators, raised his arm and pointed toward that mortal, while from his outstretched hand there poured upon him a stream of the clear, blue light of truth, which elevated his heart, at the same time that it rendered his aspect awful and sublime.

As the foremost of the assailants reached the summit, they paused for their companions to join them, and when at length a number had clambered up to warrant them, as they thought, to advance, they saw that they were far outnumbered, and they hesitated and looked about them, to see what they should do. Being above the mist which had before enshrouded them, some of them looked with awe and awakening interest upon the scene around and below them, others gazed with stupid wonder on all they saw, while there were some whose mad passions were lashed into still greater fury by the sight of the purity and beauty with which they had no affinity, and which they felt no wish to enjoy. Some fell prostrate to the ground, as if they prayed the hills to cover them. Some knelt and extended their hands to the mortal, who was leaning on the pedestal, as if they were asking at once his forgiveness and his aid, while a few gnashed their teeth, and raved in their insensate fury. Among those I noticed one in particular. A man he was, of large intellect and great determination of character, who had once been connected with ties of intimate affection with that mortal. He was distinguished above all others by the fury of his ravings, and he attracted around him, as if looking to him as their leader, all who had kindred feelings. Their number was very small, and it was apparent to them that they could do no harm to him whom they had so thirsted to destroy. Uttering curses loud and deep against the craven hearts which had deserted their common purpose, they turned to descend again, but found their passage blocked by the ascending crowd. Their

retreat was cut off by the very aid they had invoked, and in their desperate madness they hurled themselves headlong from the precipice. I expected to see them dashed to pieces on the dark rocks 'mid which they had groveled so long. But to my astonishment the earth opened to receive them—a dreary vault from whose deep recesses dismal groans were heard, and whence ascended a smoke still blacker and more gloomy than aught yet witnessed. Down, far down, beyond mortal ken, they descended, and the earth again closed over them, yet not entirely, for some fissures were left, whence would occasionally issue some puff of that black and noxious smoke. At this moment I cast my eyes upon that mortal who was still leaning on the pedestal; and though he retained the same immovable posture, and the same calm exterior, I saw that his soul was shaken to its inmost depths by the horror and compassion which the incident had awakened. He now, for the first, removed from his position, and approached the dark mortals who were then on the summit. As he moved away from the pedestal, I saw that on three of its sides there were inscriptions, the fourth was yet a blank. I read a part of only one of them, on that side against which he had leaned, and I could not make out all that, for I was at too great a distance to read the smaller letters. All I could read was, near the top of it, “Jesus of Nazareth,” and near the bottom, “Love one another.”

He approached first those dark mortals that were prostrate. He took each by the hand, lifted them up, and spoke words of comfort to them. Then beckoning to him some of the people from the ships, he committed each one to their care. Thus also he next dealt with those who had kneeled. And I observed that those ships' people clustered kindly around each, and conducted them down the path toward the little hamlet at the foot of the gigantic figure, speaking to them kind words of cheering on the way.

He then approached the other dark mortals who had neither fallen down nor knelt. They did not seem to take

much interest in the matter. They said they had no feelings of ill-will toward him. They had come up because the others had. They were willing to go back again. It was nothing to them what he believed or what he did. He asked them to look abroad upon the scene now first disclosed to their view. To oblige him they were willing to do so, but they turned back to him and seemed to say, "Well! what of that?"

He left them with a feeling that but little, yet awhile at least, was to be hoped from those who were indifferent alike to good and evil, and he prepared to descend the precipice by the route by which they had ascended.

Numbers of those who had attempted to ascend were clinging in the path, but as he approached, they turned to flee from him, and hurried down the bank, in such affright and inconsiderate haste, that they tumbled over each other, and many of them fell down. He descended with ease, and found himself standing alone among those who but a short time before had, with such fiery haste, sought to destroy him. They looked upon him with various emotions, fear being predominant, for how could they have supposed that he would be so strongly supported, or could wield so great a power? In a little while, however, he was joined by the people from the ships. The admiral had landed, and now approached with a strong party. He advanced to that mortal with great respect, and received from him directions what to do. A general plan of amelioration which had been previously formed by him was now explained to the admiral, who caused the materials with which his ships were laden to be landed, and set his men to work in various places. The ground was leveled and fitted for cultivation. The fissures, through which the smoke from the dark pit occasionally issued, were closed up. Houses were erected, streets marked out, gardens inclosed, and that which had been a dreary waste bid fair soon to bloom and flourish, a fit habitation for intelligent and immortal man. Even the dark mist which had so long brooded over that unhappy

place began gradually to vanish away, and open a view of the brightness and glory of the firmament

The dark mortals wondered, and some of them began to rejoice at the advent of comforts of which they had been hitherto totally ignorant. But there were some who had chosen to bury themselves deep in those caverns, and for their redemption also that mortal seemed anxious, and after giving instructions in respect to that, he turned and wended his way back alone to his humble cot in the hamlet near the gigantic figure. As he passed along I saw that his mind was engrossed, not with the recollection of what he had done, but with the thought how he could yet save those who had plunged into that dark and smoldering pit.

He approached the hamlet apparently unnoticed, and entered his own lowly habitation. It was the same place, unchanged in appearance from what it was, when formerly in his agony he had entered there, except that I now saw written on the walls—

Would'st teach new truths and save a sinking land?

All fear, none aid, few understand.

Painful preëminence! yourself to view

Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

He seated himself on the same pallet, but with feelings much, much more gentle and subdued. He soon perceived the same kind spirit to be sitting by his side, and he suffered her again to lead him to the door of his cot. It was no longer necessary for her to point out to him the beauties of the scene. He comprehended them at a glance, and felt a holy calm reflected from them into his inmost soul. She led him to the same spot where he had before caught a glimpse of the dark inclosure, his own former abiding-place, and bade him look again. The dark mist had vanished. The resplendent light from beyond the mountains was now reflected from the "firmament on high" down into that place once so gloomy, and lighted it up with the glorious splendor of wisdom and love. In place of that bleak and dreary waste which once had obtained there, there was now

seen a cheerful and pleasant village, and instead of people ever shrouded in gloom and goaded by evil passions, a cheerful, industrious, and comparatively happy population were evidently progressing onward and upward.

She bid him observe that these people in their happiness were not thinking of him, who had at so much risk to himself obtained it for them; and, while a momentary pang at this apparent ingratitude shot through his heart, she taught him to remember that his reward was to be found only in the consciousness of having done well.

Section Thirty-seven.

PART FIRST.

Sunday, June 1st, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, the circle were present, with the addition of Mr. and Mrs. S.

It was first written :

THE spirits are all assembled here, and desire that the elevated spirit who is here from the higher circles or spheres may have the opportunity of manifesting himself through the mediums present. Therefore, my friends, let your minds be very sincerely disposed. It is not often that an opportunity like this is afforded you. The attempt will be made to impress Judge Edmonds, and if they fail, they will try some other medium present. It is proposed that the Judge give his impressions as they come, and in the order of their coming, so that their character may be determined. With love so great that it is unspeakable, I greet you to-night,

and give you as my earnest wish this simple advice, Go on, go ever onward.

SWEEDENBORG.

While that was going on, I had a brief vision, which I record in another paper.

After relating that, I was again impressed, and for at least an hour I seemed to be in the higher spheres, and related to the circle what I saw. That, also, is recorded in another paper.

When that was over, I discovered that Dr. Dexter was in a magnetic sleep, and had been for some time. I remarked that the spirits were evidently attempting to impress him.

It was written :

Yes. Spirits are impressing him, but the whole attempt has been to impress others. The time will come when the one impressed will speak audibly the truths revealed. So let your thoughts be directed to this subject against your next meeting. Nothing more can be done to-night.

When the Doctor came out of his sleep, we asked him if he could remember his impression. He could remember only being on a high hill, and said that more was prevented by an over-anxious desire as to what was coming.

It was written :

There have been no distinct images imprinted on the Doctor's mind for the reason he has given, nor can there be, unless there is an entire passiveness of mind, and an attempt to bring the thought to one point. This is, indeed, a serious moment, for there are spirits here who have never yet communicated with man. They have left their high spheres to come to you, and they desire to find you all alike, your minds like wax, ready to receive impressions. Oh! my friends, strive to be able to receive all that is intended for you, that you may be able to tell the world the truths of God made manifest indeed.

Bacon called you the Sacred Circle, but your name will be still more glorious, so indeed you are worthy. Never yet have I cautioned you, never have I chided, but I am impressed to say, that if you would advance still farther, there must be a sincere desire rightly to understand all that

is presented, a proper examination and appreciation of what is taught, an anxious wish to have others profit by the truths you have investigated and found to correspond with God's laws in every department of nature of which you have knowledge, and the distinct earnest hope and desire to see the revelations vouchsafed from those spirits who are able to open the very doors of the spheres.

I refer to the spirits from the higher circles. Mrs. S. can be influenced, if she will give her mind to it for a moment.

She did so, and was influenced to say a few words to us, which were not recorded.

PART SECOND.

FIRST VISION.

THE first vision I had this evening was of this sphere. It was of quite an extensive landscape, pleasantly diversified with hill and dale, field and forest, and land and water. There was a placid quiet stream meandering among the fields just at the foot of some hills. It was dammed up at one place, so that it made a small lake, and then found its way in the same quiet manner off in the distance. The time was a little before sundown, and I was looking south. Along the west bank of that lake I saw a couple strolling along, arm in arm, very moderately, and apparently enjoying the scene. They were going from me, and I saw only their backs. As I gazed on them, I heard the sound of martial music off at their right. I looked in the direction of the sound, and saw a company of cavalry coming out of the woods and over the hills. Their armor glistened in the sun as they came along the road, and it seemed to me they were of the class of Schwartz reiters, or Flayers, as they were called some two hundred years ago—mere merce-

nary soldiers who hired themselves out to the trade of slaughter, and who, when not thus employed, robbed and murdered on their own account. They were now on one of their predatory expeditions, and at such times all who came in their way were in danger.

As their long files extended over the hills, and their front rank came in sight, I thought that that couple who were thus quietly strolling along the bank of the lake stood a chance of being disagreeably interrupted in their walk. But, contrary to my expectation, the attention of the soldiers seemed most strongly drawn to the pleasant repose of the scene. They took no notice of those persons, but hurried to the bank of the lake, and, dismounting from their horses, threw themselves on the greensward to enjoy the beauties of the whole scene.

In the mean time that couple walked around the south end of the lake, crossed its outlet, and entered a pleasant cottage, which was embowered amid the dark foliage of the trees, and surrounded by flowers and fragrant shrubbery.

While the soldiers were thus reposing in the soft light of the setting sun, I saw moving around among them a person dressed in white, who was invisible to them. He passed from one to another, unconsciously to them, whispering words of peace and quiet to each. On some it produced the effect to desire to abandon their lawless life of violence altogether; on others, to wish, for a while at least, to remain there and rest; while some became indignant at the craven spirit, as they called it, which their companions manifested. They had a vehement discussion among themselves, which ended in some four or five of them mounting their horses, and riding furiously back the way they came, while the others began to prepare habitations for themselves and to cultivate the ground. And the scene closed upon my view while they were thus engaged in preparing to enter upon a life more congenial to their true nature, and more consonant to the laws of God.

PART THIRD.

SECOND VISION.

The second vision which I had this evening, was as follows :

I was standing, as it were, outside the entrance to a very pleasant scene. It seemed as if I was behind a high wall, which terminated just in front of me. All that I saw at first was the beginning of a roadway, on the farther side of which was a low stone wall, surmounted by an iron railing, and behind that, very dense and beautiful shrubbery. It seemed as if there was an elegant garden within that inclosure. So much of the roadway as I saw, was as if it was paved with the brightest gold.

When I said this, as I related the vision, the spirits wrote through Dr. Dexter, "That is but the reflection of the light." I soon saw that it was so, for the light faded, and the road assumed the usual dull appearance of earth.

Soon, I moved out from behind that high wall, and entered upon that roadway. On my right, the low wall, with its iron railing, and its dense shrubbery behind it, extended far ahead of me. On my left there was a stream of water, a rod or two wide, running along calmly, quietly, and on its opposite bank the ground ascended gradually for a short distance, and all along the summit and sides of the bank were pleasant cottages, surrounded by trees and flowering shrubs, with pleasant gardens in front, extending down the slope to the water's edge.

I walked along admiring and enjoying the scene as inexpressibly beautiful and grateful. I observed that the cottages were all occupied by a very cheerful, happy population, who were living in great harmony with each other. The waters of the stream were of a clear, deep blue, and very transparent. I learned they were the waters of Truth,

of which the residents on the bank were permitted to partake freely, and which were ever flowing calmly at their feet.

After strolling along that path for some distance, I came to a gateway or entrance on my right hand. It was wide and massive, and very beautiful in its architectural proportions. I paused here for some time, and contemplated the prospect before me. I feared that I was not worthy to enter, and that it was permitted to me merely to have a view of the beauties which were there scattered with such profusion.

The path that led from the entrance was broad and smooth. At a short distance it turned to the left, and was hidden from sight by the foliage. On the right hand, the ground was laid out in flower-beds, where every variety of perfume and color were abundant. On the left there were trees, whose foliage was very green and dense. And over the whole scene was the most beautiful purple-hued pink light that can be imagined. It was very clear and soft. The temperature of the air was mild, and a cool and gentle breeze just stirred the leaves, giving a quiet life to the scene.

After gazing some time, and seeing no one to molest or hinder me, I was emboldened to enter, but not without some remains of my apprehensions. Hence it was, that instead of taking the wide path, I struck off into a narrow one on my left, which led me amid the deep, tangled wild-wood, where the shade was as cool and refreshing as it was dense. It soon led me up to what I discovered was the porter's lodge, completely buried and hidden from view by the trees, yet in a pleasant sunny glade, where flowers and shrubbery and running water added to the calm enjoyment of the scene. Here I found the porter, who bid me enter at pleasure and wander where I would, and who told me that the path in which I was, soon terminated in the main avenue, and that I could enter it either by going on or returning. I preferred the former, for I wished to see all I

could of so lovely a country, and now felt myself not to be an intruder, but a welcome visitor.

So I strolled along a great distance, amid a landscape varying in its appearance at every step, and presenting to my vision beauties of nature of which I had never before had any conception, and which I have seen only on such occasions as this. The loveliness of the light particularly struck me. I saw no sun, yet there was the splendor of mid-day. A few clouds were seen in the sky, reposing quietly, like every thing else I saw, and they were tinged from time to time with ever-changing colors, now pure white, like huge banks of snow, now of a golden hue, imparting a pleasant sense of warmth, anon streaked with crimson and bronze, and all set off by the purest blue as their background.

It was not long before I observed signs of human habitations. Houses of different sizes and forms began to appear on my right hand and on my left; some on grassy eminences, whence could be had a view of the vast country around; some in deep shady glens, where a glowing light could not penetrate, and where the reigning stillness was broken only by the murmur of a waterfall; some surrounded by gardens, where fruit and flowers grew in every variety and great abundance, and some under the shade of immense trees, at whose feet rolled away in the distance a soft and velvet-like lawn.

The inhabitants were in different parts of the grounds, reposing in the shade, or working in the gardens, or gathered in social intercourse in little groups, presenting on all hands a scene of most surpassing loveliness and happiness, which it is far beyond my power to describe. My eyes filled; and my heart swelled at the sight of felicity which I had not deemed it possible for man to enjoy.

As I passed one of the buildings, I was attracted toward it in a singular manner. It stood back some distance from the road along which I was walking. It was completely covered with the shade of large trees, yet from its piazza

an extensive prospect was in view. Flowering vines clustered around its entrance. On one side was a little garden full of flowers and perfume. On the other, a small brook came tumbling down from the hills behind it, and in front was a smooth, close-shaven lawn of the softest green. But I saw no inhabitants about it, as I did about every other dwelling; yet it was manifest that it was occupied, and it seemed as if its tenants had retired from view. Why, I knew not, nor could I account for the singular feeling I had as I passed it. I wanted to enter it, yet was impressed with the sense of an obligation not to do so. I turned my eyes away and continued my journey; yet during the whole of my sojourn there, the feeling excited by that mansion would ever and anon intrude itself upon my mind and recall it to my memory.

As I proceeded, I passed many dwellings, where also I saw the inhabitants. They also saw me, but took no further notice of me than to smile welcomes on me as I passed.

The path in which I moved now wound its way along a side-hill, whence, on my left, I had a most magnificent view. Far as the eye could reach was spread out before me a country variegated by hills and dales, field and forest, land and water, and over all rested that beautiful light, and those ever-changing clouds which I have mentioned. Occasionally, in the distance, I saw single hills or mountains towering up, of different heights, upon some of whose summits clouds rested. In some places I saw deep valleys, over which hovered fog-like mists, more or less dense. And I could not help reflecting that though those clouds and mists added to the variety and beauty of the scene from the point whence I viewed it, yet they must, in some degree at least, obscure the view of the inhabitants in the immediate vicinity.

At length, in my journey, I came across a magnificent temple, erected in a commanding situation, and capable of containing great numbers. I entered it. It was very beautiful in its proportions, but it was not yet finished nor fitted

for use. Its floors were not laid, and under its timbers were deep and fearful-looking vaults.

I remained there but a short time, when I felt an admonition that it was time for me to return. As I came out, I lingered a moment on its porch, and looked abroad upon the vast and beautiful scene that lay before me. And here came upon me, with more force than ever, a feeling that had accompanied my whole progress, namely, that amid all this life and beauty I was alone, there was none to whom I could say, "Enjoy with me the happiness of the picture," none whom I could ask to sympathize with emotions of joy and holy calm that filled my heart to overflowing. But I checked the swelling emotion, and hastily brushing away the rising tear, turned again to my task of studying what was before me.

I wondered whence came the light that rested so inexpressibly grateful upon all around me, and instantly the question was answered. My vision was opened, and I discovered that the air was filled with bright and shining spirits, from each of whom emanated light of different hues, which mingled together and made the *tout ensemble* that had so struck me. Some of them were passing rapidly across the heavens, as if going from point to point with a speed that scarcely lagged behind the celerity of thought; others were stationary, while some were reposing on banks of clouds; and throughout them all there was a joyousness that almost made the hills clap their hands. Such of them as noticed me gave me the same smile of welcome, and as I resumed my journey out of this happy land, I could not but say to myself, "If this is heaven, oh may I be worthy of it!"

I returned by the same path by which I had entered, and again, as I passed that mansion, I felt the attraction more strongly than ever. I hurried by it, lest I might be tempted to disregard the obligation which I felt not to enter it. But after I had passed it, I could not resist the temptation to look at it once again, and then I discovered what it was

indeed that so powerfully drew me toward it. It was the residence of my wife and children. They had retired from view as I passed, lest the sight of them might have interfered with the duty before me. After I had passed, they came out; and when I turned to look back, she was standing on the piazza, at the end nearest to me, leaning toward me, her hands clasped with a gesture expressive of the deepest affection. I then saw at a glance that it was the same mansion in which I had once before been with her. There was the same bow window, closed up yet, and conveying the same admonition, but she and her children had added that pleasant stream of water that ran murmuring its gentle music through the grounds. For me that had been done, for well she knew the pleasure it would give me. I paused but a moment, however, and hurried on, in obedience to the obligation I had already felt not to stop.

Then, as I passed out, I discovered on my left, and some distance from me, a very high mountain, whose sides seemed inhabited, and whose summit was buried in the clouds. I gave it, however, but a single glance, and passed out, wondering how it was that I had not earlier discovered that there was a place yet higher even than that which had seemed to me to be far lovelier than poets have ever painted heaven.

Section Thirty-eight.

PART FIRST.

Thursday, June 16th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, all the circle were present except Mr. and Mrs. S.

It was written:

I AM sorry our other friends are not with us to-night. They assist us much in the efforts we design to make. Have them with you when you meet. But I am pleased to find so much harmony of feeling.

The Judge is better; and though the Doctor is quite unwell, yet we can vividly impress the Judge to-night, and, for the first time, he will be impressed by one of the spirits mentioned, personally. I am directed to say that this spirit will also try to make him feel the hand which he will lay on his brow in token of love.

My friends, could you but know the great joy there is among us, could you see the unspeakable happiness which animates every countenance at the spread of the glorious truths which are being revealed to man, and could you know the deep, earnest faith we have in those selected to give to the world the first revelations of the higher spirits to man, you would then realize the emotions of spirit in the spheres, the emotion of unmixed love at the dawning of truth. Our blessings with each and all.

SWEEDENBORG.

Now the circle will keep silence, and be as still as possible. The teaching will be of much importance. There-

fore let each one be seated most comfortably, so as not to disturb the vision. Glorious things will be revealed of the God, and truth, and true liberty.

The vision then began, and lasted more than two hours. Some things were written in explanation as it went along. They will be found incorporated in the vision. After it was over, it was further written :

This general description is the first in this series. In the next vision we shall attempt to describe persons and scenes. The words uttered are worthy to be printed in letters of gold and set in tablets of silver. I desire to say, that before you meet you should examine yourselves, and divest your minds of all earthly ideas as far as possible. Let your hearts feel what was written on the gallery, "Love one another."

In the name of God, I declare to you, that in your purity, in your love of God and your race, is the whole end and aim of your existence. What will be the end of all these truths, so you yourselves are not the first to feel and act upon the revelations made? Hear, feel, and act. Good-night.

PART SECOND.

VISION.

The vision I had this evening was a continuation of that of last Sunday.

I PASSED along by the same pleasant path, by the side of that stream of deep, clear, blue water, and entered through the same gateway, and traveled on even farther than I had on the former occasion. My object now was to ascend that mountain, which I had observed just as I was leaving before. To do that, I had to penetrate far into the country which lay at its base, in order to find the beginning of a road which wound its way spirally around the mountain to its summit.

It seemed to me that it was not generally known in the country which I had already visited, that there was any road by which it could be ascended. Now and then one would find the path and ascend it, but he returned not again to tell to others how they, too, might go up. But I had reflected upon it, and had made up my mind that there must be some mode of ascending it, and I would try it. I saw from where I was at its base, what seemed to me to be signs of a path up along and around the mountain; and following its direction I went far into the interior, until I found it. It was a wide, smooth, beautiful path, gently rising all the way, but not difficult to climb, yet I saw no one traveling it. Here, too, I must pursue my journey alone. I entered upon the task with alacrity, and as I ascended I had even a more extended and beautiful view of the vast country below me than I had had before. As I went along, I found the journey truly delightful. Every once in a while I came across running streams of pure water, or cool springs bubbling out from the rocks, and here and there shaded bowers, in which the weary traveler might rest himself, lulled by the murmur of running brooks and elevated by the sublime and extended prospect before him.

It seemed that my first entrance into that country had at the time been known only to a few; but the knowledge that a mortal had penetrated where only disembodied spirits dwelt, had spread abroad among them, so that when I entered thus a second time, news of the event spread with great rapidity in all directions, awakening great curiosity to know what it foreboded. As I ascended I became visible to them, and they hastened toward the spot to get a nearer view. They came in all directions, from as far off as the eye could see: some from those deep valleys over which those mists hung, some from the hills which towered among the clouds. Some came with ease and some with difficulty, clambering up on their hands and knees, and asking aid from each other. They came in vast numbers, aiming to

get on to the level, where was the unfinished temple. I saw the vast numbers moving, yet I knew not what it meant. So I paused in my upward journey, and leaning with my arms upon a parapet erected along the outside of the path for the protection of travelers, I looked abroad to discover what this general movement meant. As they severally attained the level at which they were aiming, and which was plainly enough accessible to them, I observed that their attention was directed solely to me, and they were wondering how I had attained that position. I resolved to tell them, for I felt that I could make myself heard by them, vast as the assemblage was getting to be. But for that purpose I must wait for those in the distance to come up.

While thus waiting, I discovered a number of incidents of much interest.

I observed that those who were inhabiting the isolated hills, which I saw in that extended country, could not reach the level at which all were aiming without first descending from their elevation to a position far below that level, and then climbing to the new elevation. They had been very well content with their former position, and thought they had got as high as they could go; but when they saw me, a mere mortal, ascending even higher, a desire to go and do likewise was awakened; they found, not only that there was a higher elevation than their own, but that in order to reach it they must descend from their false eminence, and begin again the task of upward progression.

I observed, also, that the spirits who floated in the air, and gave light to that country, were not visible to its inhabitants, as they had been for a moment to me on the former occasion. They were now again visible to me, and I noticed how singularly and yet how beautifully each one's sphere of light mingled in and blended with the others, and that there was a universal power of attraction of one sphere to another. They were ever attracted toward each other, until they blended in one harmonious whole, which lighted up that world with a splendor not of earth, but heavenly. And

thus I was allowed to see a practical illustration of that great principle of attraction which pervades and governs the whole created universe, and is its eternal law emanating from the Great Mind which fashioned all things.

I observed, also, from one of the spirits thus floating in the air, a stream of soft, violet-colored light, passing directly to some part below. I followed its direction, and saw that it passed to and enveloped the person of my wife. I saw that she was standing on the front piazza of her dwelling, with her back turned toward me. It had become known to her, as well as to all the others around, that I was intending to speak to them, and I saw that she was overcome by the same emotion which early in life had always prevented her being present at any effort of mine at public speaking.

I paused here in relating the vision, to inquire of the attending spirits what that singular colored light denoted? and it was answered: "A desire to progress."

At length that vast multitude had all assembled, and in plain and simple language I related to them my spiritual experience, and detailed the various steps which I had taken in my upward progress. I showed them how it was as easy for them as it had been for me. I described the pleasantness of the path I was now treading, and painted out to them where it begun and how they might enter it.

When I had finished, I resumed my journey, but occasionally looked back to see what effect had been produced. I saw many hurry off to find the entrance to the path. Many found it, and began to ascend it: some with furious haste, which soon put them out of breath; some timidly, as if not exactly sure where it might lead them; some tottering with old age, supporting their trembling steps by leaning on some younger one—and to them every step became more vigorous and youthful; some females, leading young children, who occasionally broke away to chase some little bird or pick some flower by the wayside; husbands and wives walking fondly arm in arm, sustaining each other,

and some calmly, deliberately investigating every step, and increasing in speed as they ascended. In fine, from the level on which the multitude had stood, all the way round to the entrance to the path, and some distance up, they were scattered, hastening to ascend. I paused, and asked myself whether I ought not to wait for them. I immediately became sensible of the presence around me of several of those bright spirits whom I had seen. They answered my query: "No; that will continue forever. Pass thou on to thy task."

I accordingly resumed my journey; and as I passed around the mountain, turning my back on the scenes thus far familiar to me, I came in sight of one which I had much admired in Central America. There lay before me the beautiful lake of Managua, with its densely wooded promontories jutting out into it, the rugged mountains on its opposite bank, with their immense craters, rude and rough at their summits, and their sides a desert waste of lava or volcanic ashes. But here the rough edges had been smoothed by the hand of time, and the sides were covered with a verdant foliage and the habitations of man.

The earth, as well as man, had progressed.

At length I passed above the clouds which surrounded the mountain, and attained its summit. The clouds shut out from my view the country which I had left, and I stood alone on that mountain top, looking abroad upon a new scene. Immediately around and above me, floating in the air, were many bright and shining spirits, some of whom had been constantly with me from the time I had addressed the multitude. They were welcoming me to my new eminence. As I stood gazing upon the spirits around me, I wondered to myself what they found to do, and thought that a life of idleness must be sad and wearisome even there. My question was soon answered. I was told they were ever engaged in contributing to each other's happiness; and I saw that each of them was more regardful of others than he was of himself, and each one found his happiness in in-

creasing that of others. I learned, too, that many of them were engaged in duties in the spheres below them, in teaching and elevating the beings there—that this was to them a labor of love, and was as vast as it was endless. And I learned that many of them were occupied in studying nature in all its operations, following planetary systems in their movements through the universe, searching out the laws which govern them, and seeking to learn the attributes of God from the works of his hand. I saw them pursuing the planets in their orbits, and learning at once the infinite variety as well as the infinite wisdom of the eternal laws which govern them. I saw them careering through space in the rapid comet's train, watching with wisdom's eye the process by which those vast masses of disjointed matter were gradually progressing to the formation of a world, from whence, also, in time should spring immortal minds to people eternity.

And I was bid to look abroad on the universe that was rolling before me in the illimitable regions of space, and behold how immense was the field in which the immortal mind might roam in search of that knowledge which is from on high, and will make it wiser and better unto salvation.

Far off in the distance, with lofty and dignified mien, seated on a throne, and facing toward me, I saw a bright spirit. On each side of him was an assemblage of spirits, who were attending upon him.

In a little while the whole of that scene moved toward me, and the spirit who was seated on the throne approached so near that I could see the expression of his countenance. It was that of calm benevolence and wisdom. He caused me to be taken from the mountain—how I know not—and then he and his attendants, bearing me with them, returned to his former position.

When we arrived there, I saw on my left, high above me in the heavens, a very massive and magnificent temple, and a path that led up to it from behind his throne.

As I was describing this, it was written, through Dr. Dexter, "It is for you to ascend."

I did ascend—how, I can hardly tell. It seemed as if I was borne along by some power not my own. I arrived at the entrance to the temple. I want language to describe its beauties. The order of architecture was unlike any thing I had ever seen, but it was so perfect in its construction, that it was indeed pleasurable to look upon, and so just in its proportions, that I was unaware of its vastness until I measured it by a comparison with my own dimensions. It was built around four sides of a parallelogram, leaving an area inside, uncovered overhead, and capable of containing many thousand persons.

On three sides of the building were rooms devoted to the residence of spirits. There were three stories of these rooms and galleries running around those three sides on each level. At the other end was a platform, ascended by a flight of steps, interspersed with smaller platforms or landing-places. I counted the steps in the several flights. They were 3, 5, 7, 9, 7, 5. I ascended them, and stood upon the main platform. It was vast, and capable of containing many hundred people. From it were entrances to different departments devoted to the use of its inhabitants, and several openings or windows from which I looked, and had a view of the surrounding scenery. I beheld at one place a beautiful garden, over which rested a light more beautiful than any thing I had yet seen. The foliage was of a beautiful green, but was transparent. At another place I looked abroad upon the universe, and down before me I saw many planetary systems, rolling in their orbits as various as the imagination can conceive: some in a horizontal plane, some rectangular, and others in various directions, seeming one vast discord, yet easily seen to be the wisest harmony when once understood.

When I had gazed for some time upon this scene, I heard gentle music from a numerous band, and vast numbers entered the temple.

The area and the galleries were filled by many thousands. On the platform entered the presiding spirit, with several hundred attendants. He took his seat facing the multitude, and bade me look upon them and read their thoughts. I did so, and in every heart there was this thought alone, **GOD IS LOVE**. Along the front of the galleries, on three sides of the area, were written in words of a bright silver flame, the words, **LOVE ONE ANOTHER**, in Arabic and Roman characters and German text. The space above the area was filled with hosts of shining spirits floating in the air. Some of them drew out a scroll and spread it before me. On it was written **PROGRESSION, ONWARD, UPWARD, FOREVER**. When I had read the words, they fell back and opened to me a view above and far distant; and there, as far as the eye could reach, I saw new scenes, new countries, new stages of progress, one above another without end.

When I had seen these things, the presiding spirit then spake to me these words (they were not uttered with vocal sounds, but I read the thoughts in his mind as he formed them, and so, it seemed to me, did all that vast assemblage):

"Go back," he said, "to earth, and teach its darkened inhabitants how glorious is the country which they may inhabit, how bright the happiness they may earn for themselves!

"Beseech them no longer to grovel in the earth, seeking their enjoyment in earthly objects, but to look up, up, and from on high shall come to them the knowledge which shall indeed make them free. Teach them that happiness and heaven do not come to them as a gratuity, but are to be earned by their labor, to be merited by their toil. Teach them that God does not work by miracles, but by eternal, immutable laws, which are all-powerful to save, all-mighty to condemn, and which are not found in the glosses of men, but are written by his own Almighty hand, in all of nature that is spread out around them.

"Bid them look out upon the universe of worlds, which from your high place you can behold marshaled in their

orbits through the boundless regions of space, and reflect upon the countless numbers of living souls inhabiting them and destined for eternity, and ask themselves if it can be that for this earth, which is but a grain of sand on the shore of eternity's ocean, His eternal laws can have been suspended?"

When he had finished, I was led rapidly back to earth by the way I had trod in ascending, filled with the thought, How vast, how boundless must be that love which can thus open to man's attainment such illimitable fields of happiness!

Section Thirty-nine.

Friday, June 17th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Mr. and Mrs. S. were present, besides the Doctor and myself.

The Doctor had been saying something about his connection with me, in regard to these very extraordinary revelations, etc. As soon as he felt the spirit-influence, it was written:

I WANT to say a few words to you both to-night, in our old style of plain talking.

I have heard your remarks, Doctor, and I think I appreciate the feeling which gave rise to them. A mind like yours, tenacious of its own thoughts, hard to convince, and earnest in its efforts, is likely, when it gives its belief, to give it with the whole force of its power. The condition in which you are placed with the Judge is one which draws out the secret feelings of your nature. You venerate intellect and you appreciate sincerity While you are con-

vînced of the truth of spirit-intercourse, you look with respect and deference at that mind which has yielded up its own strong opinions to the same evidence of its truth. It is not strange, therefore, that while your whole soul is deeply imbued with the glorious visions portrayed to the Judge's mind, that your soul's reverence accompanies that feeling for the man also. You imagine your inferiority of intellect, and perhaps of purity, too; and while there are few minds in the whole world to which visions of like character could be given without either degrading them by vanity or perverting them by an unjust application, yet your mind is and must be on a level with his, or how could you act together? Fear not, then, to open your thoughts freely; fear not to say what you think to him, for he will properly advise you. Has he not passed through the same difficulties and been tried by the same circumstances? It is his mind, which from its experience, from his true regard for you, from his recognition of your own mind, and his appreciation of the feelings of your heart, that will exercise a healthful influence on your own in all its perplexities and conditions.

Dr. Dexter, Judge Edmonds in his nature is above the world in many particulars. That he loves you I am bound to declare, and that he feels for you I know. Trust him, therefore, in every thing, and regard him as you do, and you will find when he reaches the mountain's height you will not be left lagging behind.

I rejoice at the feeling of childlike desires which actuate you both. I deeply participate in the common sentiment which I feel governs many of the acts of your life; and let me say to you, Judge, that the half has not been shown you, and your soul shall drink such draughts of pleasure in the contemplation of the scenes which shall be opened to you, that even on earth it will be a foretaste of heaven's joys.

BACON.

I then said, I wished to inquire whether, in receiving these visions, I

made my mind passive enough, and placed it sufficiently under the control of the spirits? For I aimed at keeping full possession of my senses through it all, and at preserving the full exercise of my reason as to every thing that occurred, and I doubted some, whether by this preservation of my selfhood I did not interfere with this part of the teaching?

It was answered:

This is a lawyer-like inquiry. If your mind was incapable of reasoning when the vision was passing before it, how would you be able to decide on its authenticity? or how be able to receive the moral which it contains? No; we appeal to nothing but the simple power of discrimination. We do not ask, even in a vision, that your mind should be incapable of deciding upon the evidences presented. Your senses should all be alive, and thus you are the better able to decide on the nature of the vision, and whether it be from your own mind or from the spirits. This question, however, is proper; and while it rarely happens that a vision is presented to any mind without entirely abstracting from every surrounding object, in your case it is presented as it is for a special purpose, and it is best as it is.

We then proceeded with our criticism, and near the close of one of the papers Mrs. S. proposed to go home, saying she was too tired for the spirits to influence her to-night.

It was written:

I do not think you are the best judge, Mrs. S. They will affect you if you are willing, and I want you to be impressed after the correction of this teaching.

Then, after finishing that paper, it was added:

She will be impressed if she will be passive. Good spirits are around her, and are striving to elevate her mind and thought. She assists you much, and needs your help, too. So let her mind be yielding and quiet.

She was soon influenced, and said:

I come on an errand here this evening, or at least was sent to give that which might be a lesson when taken in connection with some of your teachings.

While a dweller on earth, my occupation was that of a humble artisan, and I earned my daily bread by following a humble occupation, and was only prevented from becoming an enthusiastic laborer in the higher branches of my profession by the force of circumstances, which made me what the world called a poor man. But there was ever within my heart a deep yearning, an earnest longing to excel in that in which I was only a lower-class workman. And having lived out the number of years which my body could sustain my soul on this earth, I departed to another sphere, and now I wish to show you in what I have been engaged since my entrance there. I was not what the world called a religionist, nor was I an immoral man, but my principles were based on the considerations which I could bring to bear in favor of natural reasoning, or, as you may call it, common sense.

Therefore, when entering upon my next state, I naturally shrunk back, being afraid to enter boldly a place of which I knew so little beforehand. I was very soon, however, met by some dear relatives, who received me with exceeding joy and thankfulness. And having explained to me the position which I should have to occupy, they told me I should be amply supplied with instructors, who would patiently and mildly teach me all I might desire to know; that whether it was much or little was wholly depending on myself, for knowledge is never forced on any one in the spirit-world. So after becoming initiated into the ways and customs of that place, or community as I may call it, I soon became deeply interested in the work which my hands found to do, and that was the very same occupation which I had so earnestly desired to excel in while on earth. It may seem strange, but it is true, that I was really engaged in the same occupation, and the same pursuits attracted me which had engrossed me while in the body, but my materials were of a more refined nature.

I resided in that place until I became too old a scholar to learn any more in that school. I was then impressed to

go to another, and so I have been studying and laboring for years in this pursuit. Not in this alone, but it was the predominant topic which has engaged my mind, having the greatest attraction for me, and calling out my energies more powerfully than any thing else. My soul is alive to all the beauties which surround it; and looking about through the land where I dwell, I see many beautiful structures that man would call a vast conception of brain, and that, my friends, is the conception of my brain. That which is beautiful to the eyes of others is an emanation or a labor which has been brought into its present state by the energies which have been expanded and developed in my individual case.

Thus you may see that all spirits have an occupation or employment, but mine is not performed solely by me. There are many others assisting me, and learning of me that which has made me so happy and useful to those around me, while others are quite as useful to me, thus all depending on one another in our sphere of existence.

I can't speak more of my experience at present, but others will who will speak better. This lesson is only given as having a connection with your late teachings—a filling up of shades, another tint in the coloring of the picture.

After a few minutes' interval another spake, through Mrs. S. He began by saying:

For the wicked shall be cast into hell, and all the nations that forget God. This is a solemn thought, my hearers, and one on which we should prayerfully and candidly exercise our minds. Yea, verily. It is a solemn thought. The wicked shall be cast into hell, where the worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched. Oh! my friends, flee from the wrath to come. Put away your sins, lest the son of man come in the night-time, and oh! ye sinners! beware how ye tempt an angry God!

This was the doctrine I preached on earth, this the way in which I filled the poor human heart with fear and trembling, with shrinking from a kind and beneficent God whose

only manifestation is smiling on his creatures, by calling him angry ! by crying up hell-fire, the horrors of those who disobey, and distorting every thing to suit my own peculiar views. I thought I was doing right and God a service by upholding these gloomy dogmas which I gave forth with such a zeal, with such bitter denunciations against the erring mortals who should have been encouraged and dealt kindly with, and not horrified and frightened with the contemplation of death.

I thus departed from earth, feeling happy that I had done my duty and borne my cross, and might enter into the joys of my Father's house. I entered the spirit-world, but was not met by the rejoicing and bright angels I expected ; by some friends, to be sure, but their countenances were sad and gloomy ; there was evidently something on their minds. Instead of rejoicing and songs of praise, it was rather a gloomy and mournful greeting on my first entrance, and a sadness came over my soul. I asked how is this ? Why should heaven seem so gloomy a place ? I said, Friends, can you tell me the reason ? There is no rejoicing, no gladness in your looks. You have some inward sorrow. Pray, convey me to Him whose cause I have served. Let me see the Saviour who died on the cross to redeem sinners. Give me something to repay me for all my labor.

One venerable-looking brother, whom I had known on earth, approached me solemnly, and, taking my hand, said, Our life-teachings have been wrong. They have caused more mourning and shrinking from the approach of death than happiness, driving hundreds away by their asperity who would have been glad to gaze beyond the veil of eternity. I asked, Can it be possible that my whole life has been spent wrongly, that I lived an inharmonious life, that instead of doing God service, I have done evil toward my fellow-men ?

My soul was so troubled and cast down, that after pausing awhile, I said to that brother, "What shall I do to be saved ?" He said, When you shall see your errors, and be

willing to go down and redeem the wrong you have done in the hearts which are there, then, and not till then, will you begin your path of ascension, and by your labor blot out your own sins by assisting others to blot out theirs.

And, my friends, as soon as I was made conscious of my error, I began my work. I gave up my narrow conceptions of the Deity. Groveling worm that I was, how little did I know of the majesty of God! I began earnestly and trustfully to cast away the chains that bound my soul. I began my labors. And, oh yes, it was a labor, indeed, sufficient to wash away my many sins, when I shall have washed away the errors from those minds whose ignorance was made darker by my errors, and who might now have been farther advanced but for my teachings.

I am now ascending. I begin to see the beauties of the spirit-world, and the tears fill my eyes when I think what I might have been.

Friends! thank your God that you are free, and that you are on the road ahead, far in advance of many of the dwellers in the spirit-land.

Section Forty.

Sunday, June 19th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, he and his wife alone of the circle being present, it was written :

It will hardly correspond with your notions of spirit-feeling that we should feel disappointment. Perhaps this is not true in reference to any circumstance connected with earth, except when we know that those in whom we have more than a mere interest have not fulfilled our expectations in their aspirations for truth and goodness ; but when our feelings are deeply concerned for the successful result of any duty which has been assigned us, and when we have labored for its accomplishment, and have drawn around us all the harmonies of action and sentiment, then it is that we feel disappointment. I feel this particularly to-night, as many spirits are here, and we contemplated to attempt the plans which I mentioned at a previous meeting. Any breaking in the harmony of a full circle always retards the character of the manifestation, and the subsequent circles are shorn of some of their proportions. Nothing should prevent the members of a circle being present at its meetings but sickness, or unavoidable occurrences which detain them. The addition which we proposed to the circle, we inferred would contribute to the freer display of a certain character of revelation, both from the individuals themselves and their magnetic power. But if there is any objection on their part to attend, or on the part of any other of the circle, they had better not become members. What we suggested was for the good of all, but we can not control human feeling, therefore the harmony, the spiritual

harmony must not be disturbed. While I regret the absence of so many of the members, I sincerely condole with the Judge for his continued illness, and can only say, that if he will strictly follow the Doctor's directions he will certainly recover.

From where the mellow light is constantly shedding its mild rays over the whole landscape; where, too, the brilliant tints of that gorgeous brightness which emanates from the spheres beyond illumines the blue space above with the sparkling radiance of a brightness greater than the sun; where the gentle breeze wafts the fragrance of a perfume, richer far than the odors or spices of Eastern fable; where the balmy atmosphere clothes each object with a purity surpassing man's comprehension; where each hill and valley is so beautifully laid out and fashioned in exact correspondence, that the whole landscape seems redolent in beauty of proportion and comparison; where spirits dwell and build their houses amid clustering bowers of roses, and under the shade of the spreading tree, near the bank of some murmuring waterfall, or deep secluded in the bosom of some lovely vale; where the carol of a thousand birds wakes up each echo to the clear tones of nature's music, or fills the air with the glad notes of joyous incense; where grand and magnificent structures are erected, and temples fashioned in all the chaste proportions of true beauty; where, when the duties or labor of the time are over, thousands, aye, thousands upon thousands of glad and happy spirits float in this gorgeous and yet mellow light, or walk in these shady bowers, or mingle in happy intercourse by the side of some gurgling fountain, whose sparkling waters bathe a bank of flowers, or glide peacefully through a grassy plain; where every heart is earnest in its desires to know more and more of the true properties of that wondrous mind with which they are gifted; where every emotion is one of love, and every aspiration to make that love felt; where there are none of the strifes and cares of mortality, and none of the sacrifices of future happiness

for present pleasure or profit; where the soul stands out in its proper guise, and meets the response of thought for thought; where the God who made this vast creation, whose immensity man has not the power even to imagine, is worshiped by the works of his hands; and where the spirit communes with its Creator through its own manifestations, come I, and I need not say how great must be the motive, how earnest the desire, how heartfelt the wish, that the truths I teach may be felt and appreciated, and that the feeling which brings me to you may be met by a correspondence which shall insure your constant attendance, and an ever-increasing and never-ending good; and with emotions of love toward you, and hope, oh! how strong! that indeed I may have been the instrument of directing your minds from the errors of time to the everlasting truths of eternity, I greet you in God's name, and cordially, with the spirits attending, bless you and all our friends who are absent.

SWEDENBORG.

There is no more marked and natural impulse of the human heart than the earnest longing, the strong desire for some representation of the Power which it is taught to worship. And it is a singular confirmation of the remark that I am about to make, that this desire is manifest in every race of man known to exist on the surface of your globe. Go where you will, among savage or civilized, this corresponding sympathy binds them together, as emanating from the same source. The savage has his idol, or sees in some stupendous mountain the dwelling-place of that Great Spirit whose authority he recognizes, and whose power he worships. The Christian or the civilized erects temples and fills them with images, or suspends in the niches or over its altars the pictures of the Christ, or the mother who bore him, or some of the many good men and women whom he has presumed to be God's representative on earth. What, therefore, is this sentiment but the soul's affinity with the source from which it sprang—its innate claim

of kindred with the God who breathed it into the body he fashioned from earth?

It appears a plain demonstration, that were the soul a mere accident of creation, or if it had no intimate connection with the Creator, this feeling would not be found a universal sentiment, exerting so great an influence on the minds, hearts, and acts of man. On the contrary, we should find no desire to penetrate into futurity, to gaze into the profound darkness which shuts out every thing beyond the grave. We should observe man without any distinct desires above the earth on which he lives, and a being devoid of any religious sentiment, whether from revelation or education.

But God has no less wonderfully made man than he has naturally implanted the true desire of nature in that soul, which by right claims kindred with himself. And while this soul's desire has been wrongly directed by the admixture of creature worship with Creator adoration, God has placed all around us the evidences of himself, as the Power whom we should worship, the Being from whom wisdom, goodness, and love have emanated to both man and every other part of creation.

Thus while this desire is a paramount feeling in every heart, and while it actuates all men alike, the very images of himself which have been placed before the searching eye of man, have been neglected for some mysterious representation of God, surrounded by attributes with which the natural mind has clothed him.

Nature everywhere is God's acknowledgment of himself, and is enough to satisfy the most earnest longing of all men, if it had not been perverted by the arts of man and the concerted plans to form a church on earth which should shadow to the world God as a spirit, but in reality personating God as a man.

I have made these remarks in a desultory way, merely to show you that God's works on earth are no less a response to the spirit's desire than are his works in the

spheres. Nature claims that affinity as well as man, for God himself can only be seen through his works; and as we study ourselves and nature, we shall better appreciate what that nature is, and understand the high destiny to which it may attain by a life corresponding to the lessons which the most insignificant object of God's handiwork teaches.

Destiny of man! What can that destiny be, when the soul realizes it is free of itself to advance, untrammelled by the dark abstractions of man's dicta, or unretarded by the fables which he has devised to keep the mind in ignorance of truth, of love, and the universal application of nature's laws to nature everywhere existing! Good-night.

SWEEDENBORG.

Section Forty-one.

Wednesday, June 22d, 1853.

This afternoon, while sitting in my parlor with Dr. Dexter, I had a call from a friend. The subject of conversation for more than an hour was spiritual intercourse, and it seemed to be his object to impress on my mind the necessity of regarding with great disfavor, if, not with absolute discredit, any communication that went to convey the idea that any one was singled out for any particular mission, or that I was receiving any truths that everybody else did not receive.

After he left, Dexter and I remained conversing on the subject.

When the spirits began to commune with us, it was evident they had heard our conversation, for thus they wrote:

If all minds were alike, and all men gifted with the same faculties and properties of intellect, there would be no difficulty in propagating truth as it is, unshorn of all charac-

teristics—plain, simple truth. Man is as susceptible of error as of truth, and it is only those minds which seem intuitively to comprehend its nature that are ready to receive truth under whatever form it may assume. There are men who contest truth, even when convinced of its reality or necessity. It is to such minds that we are to teach, not the higher manifestations, but the simpler forms; that if indeed they reject, the influence it may have shall not comprehend all that is important for man to know. Then what is to be done when all demonstration may be perverted by one, rejected by another, and denied and reviled by many? Is there not in the truth itself a power sufficient to overcome all opposition, all perversion, and accomplish its design and purpose of itself? Can that which so essentially concerns man, as the knowledge of what is right, be diverted, be made to produce evil instead of good? Shall those laws which indeed are from God, and when properly and wisely understood answer the intent for which they were instituted, be forced by man to the injury of his race? Alas! it is so. Alas! that this should be the great obstacle to man's progress on earth, and, in fact, is an all-powerful cause of his lingering by the wayside even in these spheres. What do I say, that truth itself is made a means of evil? Yes, and the history of man from the earliest period until the present time corroborates this statement. Look at every nation of which we have any knowledge, that has made its mark on the passage of time, and you will agree with me that my remark is just. That there has been no settled belief on what has been revealed as true does not in the least alter the truth itself. From the beginning until the present time the eternal manifestation has been the same yesterday, now, and forever! What has been truth to the Egyptians is no less truth to the Romans; and the divine emanation has lost none of its purity, its godlike attributes, even though that truth is altered or denied by the mass of men at the present day. In your earth, light is from one source, and your philosophers have invented means by which they have

divided it into what they call its several properties or colors. So with truth. Man's ingenuity has succeeded in giving it so many forms, that it has lost its distinguishing quality, and under the aspect they exhibit it in, it has little or no correspondence with the original idea. What, then, shall be done? How convince your minds that what we teach is true? How show you that you are not perverting the form of truth, and are not in your designs giving to the world that which bears no resemblance to the original, and which may generate evil instead of good? How know you that we have not pandered to those latent passions of your heart, that in their free exercise you may conserve the injury of your race, instead of the good which you believe to be your desire? Let us see. On retroviewing the history of man, we are struck with one prominent feature which that history presents. Though it may be masked by the peculiarities or eccentricities of his tribe or nation, we still find this characteristic to obtain, whether to the individual or to the race itself. Thus the Romans forced all men to become Romans, or at least to feel the omnipotency of their power as a nation; and neither were they satisfied until they had incorporated into their government even the most distant countries, or forced them to pay tribute to their treasury, or to acknowledge the supremacy of their laws. It was so with the earlier nations; and from thence until the present day it has been a struggle with the powers of earth to embrace under their own rule as many of the weaker nations as it was possible, in order to exercise an authority which should distinguish their possessions as belonging to or incorporated with their home government.

This feeling is not more a feature of general national concern than it is of sect or denomination, whether it regards administration of laws or the dissemination of faith, the advancement of good or the exercise of ambition, of cupidity, or evil of any kind. There has not existed on this earth a sect, a persuasion, an association, or a church but has exhibited this marked, this **ALMIGHTY** desire to persuade

all men that they were right—to show by indubitable authority that to them, as a sect, the truth was given, and that no one could be saved unless he conformed to the requirements of their faith.

And the desire to make proselytes has not been limited to a fair and impartial exhibition of their claims, but they have forced their belief by the sword, the cannon, the torture, and the faggot. Can it be that the truth needs support from the unlicensed bigotry and passions of men! From the teachings of Aristotle to the protestations of Luther, aye, from the church of St. Peter to the log meeting-house of some Methodist preacher—in all ages, by all men, by saint, by savage, or divine—the whole history of man teems with evidences of the correctness of my sayings. And how is this? I have already answered, that man, believing from the evidences he recognizes, insists that he alone is in possession of truth, and that others must believe as he dictates.

My friends, has this been the method I have pursued in my instructions? Have I, or has Sweedenborg, insisted that you should believe what we have taught to be alone the truth? Have we raised your view heavenward, that the light thereof should fill you with pride or excite your vanity? Does, indeed, what we profess to have taught you as truth develop in you a desire to build up a name and fame as individuals? Have we taught you that the God you love regards you as progressing toward his purity when actuated by the passions which retard your progress, such as pride, vanity, or ambition? To what end have we desired that any should be forward in the cause of truth? By any peculiar doctrines they were to inculcate, other than that man, influenced by circumstances surrounding him, was to work out his own salvation by denial, by self-sacrifice, by endurance, by persistent perseverance? Were they to be thus forward from the vain title of leader? Could it satisfy them that man should recognize them as such, when, indeed, their hearts were filled with all the passions

of the man, instead of the attributes of a progressive spirit?

It is not to be told you at this time that there is as yet no common ground for spiritualists to meet upon. And why? Because all desire to impress the mind that they are the favored recipients of spirit-truth. And what will time say to this?

What will time say to this? What will it say to you who are borne along by its resistless tide?

It will say to you, Man, the truths you avow are the seeds of discord to thousands of your fellow-men. The assurances you have given to the world are firebrands which have burned up the faith of a nation. A nation! verily the world! And yet, though your names will be in every man's mouth, how know you that the revilings, the epithets, the curses that will be uttered, will not make your souls tremble and your courage falter? Have you vanity? Let it run riot now, for the time will come when even that vanity will not afford you consolation. Have you ambition? Let it soar in its wildest graspings, for the time is not far distant when the truth alone will hardly afford light to the dark way before you.

Be sure that in the integrity of your own single-heartedness, in your sole interest for the good of man, will rest your hope when there shall be clouds and darkness.

Now let vanity exert her sway and ambition her power; let the mind build up visions of glory and of renown; but before you both there is but one object—the progressive development of your own souls; for without that you will be but stumbling-blocks in the way of truth—an eyesore in the path of holiness.

BACON.

Then it was added:

To-morrow afternoon or evening I will give you an idea of what I mean in what I have written to-night. I have long wished to say to you what is before you, and while the subject naturally drew out of me the dark side of the pic-

ture, justice requires that we should also truthfully picture the happiness, pleasure, and profit that will also result from your action.

Some inquiries were made as to our book, and how we should publish it, and it was said :

At the circle to-morrow night, when all are present, we will give you our wishes, and we hope they will be considered and acquiesced in without the least ill-feeling possible—all in love, and for the cause you advocate.

Section Forty-two.

Thursday, June 23d, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's. All were present. When the Doctor's hand became affected, he wrote as follows :

By permission I am allowed to continue my remarks for a short time from last night, in order that I may finish the subject which I then commenced. It is suggested that the circle should, while the Doctor is writing, place themselves in such positions as will afford them most ease. The circle may talk, and other exhibitions may be made, and no disturbance to the Doctor will take place. As this is my first formal appearance before all our circle, may I say that with no common feeling do I meet you, with no ordinary emotions of love, of joy, and of hope do I come before you, and I trust that your own hearts will respond to mine, and the many, very many spirits who are present, till all our souls, like one spirit, shall unite in the harmonies of truth, love, and the earnest desire to progress.

BACON.

During the greater part of the residue of the communication from Lord Bacon, Mrs. S. was influenced by the spirits, and spoke to different ones in the circle. It was not material to record any thing said. In the mean time the communication went on as follows through Dr. Dexter :

When to the world has been given any idea predicated on the notion of God's connection with man, it has always been that it has assumed the form which certain minds have clothed it in. All religion which recognizes God as the author of all things, has also had grafted upon it the characteristics of man's own identity. And in view of this fact, it has been that some great mind has given the forms and ceremonies of the new faith, and has directed and contrived all that were said to be necessary, and elicited from the world a belief corresponding to the greatness of the idea avowed. I do not think I have made myself plain. But this is my meaning: In proportion to the power and ability of the leaders of any new idea has man been led to believe. For this purpose it has not alone been necessary that learned men should first receive, and then teach, but that the properties of earnest desire, firmness, courage, love, and an undying faith should be the characteristics of the mind, whether it be learned or ignorant.

There is in man's moral organization an ability to believe, whether it be truth or whether it be error. And this propensity has been so often incited that it has now become proverbial, that the greater the error the more earnest the faith. You will now understand why I have made these remarks. In giving to the world a systematic statement of the truths of spirit-intercourse, it becomes a matter to us of much concern that the means through which our teachings are given shall possess all those qualities which will impress the world with the truth of those teachings, and at the same time in themselves manifest the ability to endure, to persist, to forbear, and also to love, to desire, that all men might come and see, judge for themselves, and examine and believe.

While man is ready to believe the most monstrous ab-

surdity simulating truth, he is also ready to deny, to combat, anathematize any doctrine which conflicts with his own notions of God, and his manifestations. Singular as it is, it is no less true, that while man is ever ready to receive any thing new, he is also just as ready to reject any new idea, especially on religious subjects, that subverts the faith of his fathers, even if he himself doubts the evidence on which that faith is founded.

How remarkable a feature is this in his mental construction! And while it lays him open to all kinds of deception, and subjects him to influences which degrade him spiritually and mentally, it at the same time gives him a fierceness which degenerates into persecution, and renders him a fanatic instead of a reasoner. Important, therefore, it is, that men selected for the high purpose of becoming our agents in this work of moral regeneration, should be without guile in their own hearts—like little children—and yet firm as a rock, unflinching at the revilings, the reproaches, and the censures they may meet with in prosecuting the work in which they are engaged.

The moral effect of a good name is indeed great, but the moral effect of proper action is incalculable. The world will not look upon the avowed teachers in this cause with the same feeling with which they regard any individual who teaches them a new version of what they already know, or gives them a new reading of some texts of the Bible. While it will examine all he might say or discuss, the possibility or probability of its truth, they will meet you as men who are digging up the very foundations of their early faith, they will not consent to discuss—their first action will be to deny, from denial proceed to censure, from censure to reproach, from reproach to denunciation, and from denunciation to a concerted attempt to destroy both yourselves and the doctrines you teach.

But there is one sublime thought connected with this subject, and that is, that truth will live under all circumstances, and it will also impart the life-principle to all con-

ditions and exigencies, to every man that lives, and may live, on this earth—and even will its effects be appreciable in this sphere by every spirit whose aim is progression.

It is this grand thought which will afford you a pleasure unspeakable when you shall have positive and actual proof that it is true.

To know that a simple word of truth uttered with the purpose of benefiting man shall not only absolutely benefit him presently, but that benefit shall extend from earth even to the spheres, vibrating in the hearts of good spirits there existing—a connecting link, indeed, between earth and heaven—is fraught with a pleasure so ecstatic, that in its comprehension we have a foretaste of the joys of all good and progressing spirits. This, while it gives you a basis of happiness which the world can not take away, opens the door to many others which will strengthen you and nerve you to greater efforts and more determined action.

You will gather around you all the inquiring minds of the age, a phalanx of thought, seeking, from the evidence which nature everywhere advances, the pathway to heaven. You will associate with these good men, men of purity, spiritual minds, who have eschewed the grossness of their material natures, and live on earth the first probation of the spheres.

You will with them bring around you men whose minds, rejecting all the ambiguous doctrines taught as of God, are desirous of learning what the truth is. Unsettled on any point, they will ardently embrace spirit-truths as the very faith their spirits yearn after—the very food which will satisfy their spirit-longings.

And there will cluster around you men of all classes and denominations, whose minds, agitated by the conflicting sophistries of church and priest, are wandering about, led by the denunciations from the pulpit or forced by the fear of eternal perdition. Above all, you will gather into your circle men who deny God, men whose hearts, hardened by the many doctrines taught by ministers professing to be

the humble followers of Christ, have found no light to heaven from their vessels of truth; infidels, whose souls, shut up in their gross coverings, see no escape from an eternal grave. To these you will come like sleep to the tired man—like the gentle murmur of music to the troubled heart—like health to the sick—like reason to the insane. You will return a soul to God.

You will feel in the elevation of your own souls that your birthright is eternity, and that your strength is the power of the truth you teach. Men will seek you, will bring their tribute to your feet; the wise and good, the rich and great, the noble and the clown, the sick and the needy, all will come to you, bringing their offerings of love, of affection, of reverence, of abiding confidence. The earth will send forth her thousand beauties to charm and to perpetuate the desire for still more; the heavens will send its coruscations of glorious light to illumine every feeling of your minds. Man shall, with one consent, bow to your teachings, as the truth indeed of God, and to you, as the chosen instruments of disseminating that truth. And when at last, worn out with service, you shall yield up life, your memories will be the star which shall guide the world to the portals of that heaven in which your spirits are crowned with eternal glory. Will that recompense you for earthly trials?

BACON.

After he had concluded, Mr. Warren expressed a wish that we might hear something from Swedenborg.

When it was written:

My friends, in the teachings of Bacon you will have food for many days' thought. Will you, while my spirit, and the many, many spirits who are with you, are responding to the questions, aspirations of your own desires, permit me to defer what I have to say till our next meeting, and allow us to impress, for a few minutes, the Judge and

Mrs. S!

In love,

SWEDENBORG.

I then became impressed with the following vision, which I related as I went along, and it was taken down by the Doctor as I spoke:

VISION.

I am now taken to the same scene in which I was on two former occasions, and I ascend rapidly the path which winds around and up the mountain. I am now detained a moment at the spot where I beheld the scenery which I witnessed in Central America, and evidently for the purpose of showing me how rapidly its rough and volcanic features are smoothing down into lines of beauty, and its light is assuming that soft and grateful pink-like purple hue which I saw over the rest of the scene, and which is stealing fast over this part too, though as yet it is more dim and misty. I pass on to the top of the mountain, above the clouds which surround its summit, and I observe that though those clouds hide from my view the earthly scene which I have left, yet I am able, whenever I desire to behold it, to penetrate them at a glance, and see it quite distinctly.

Now standing on the very summit of this mountain, I pause and look around. Before and below me in the deep-blue expanse, I see the countless worlds which I saw before, revolving in their orbits, presenting the same clear, silver-like balls of light which I saw before. Now having more leisure and composure, I observe the scene more distinctly, and my attention is drawn to the far distance, that I may observe that there are countless worlds rolling in the immensity of space, far beyond what my eye can see or even my imagination conceive. Immediately above me, floating on the pure air, are many radiant spirits, who welcome me with smiles of joy. I look for the throne I saw before, its occupant and attendants, but I see them not. The spirits around me bid me pause awhile, they will soon come for me. At length I see in the distance a confused mass of spirits, but nothing distinctly. At length they approach me. It is the same throne I saw before, and the same bright spirit sitting on it. But before him, at his feet,

is a closed box, shaped like the Ark of the Covenant in the Jewish ritual, but without its cherubim. At a signal from him it is opened, and from it is taken a spirit-garment like those which clothe the spirits around me. They tell me it is for me. They approach me as I yet stand on the mountain, and envelop me in it. The instant they do so I am lifted from the ground, and mingle with the spirits who are floating around me. Now I notice more particularly the singular light which surrounds the throne. It is a golden and silver light, each quite distinct, yet blended and mingled together. It is inexpressibly soft and beautiful. Behind the throne, a background, as it were, to the picture, is a screen of blue, like that of a clear, cold winter morning in our latitude. Now the throne and its attendants recede back to its former position. I go with it. It arrives at the foot of the path which leads to that temple above, which I observe that many are ascending. They pause on their way and notice my approach. They seem to be expecting me, as if they were going up there to meet me; and whereas I was only a spectator before, now I learn I am to be an actor there. Now I am at the entrance to the temple. I know not how I have ascended. I only know that I am there. It is filled in all its parts, its galleries, and in the air overhead. As I approach, attended by a small number of spirits, my advent causes a bustle, and a passage is opened for me amid the crowd, and I pass in, and stand among those in the area. I see the same spirit presiding on the platform before me, and I now notice, what I did not before, on the cornice over the recess on which the platform is, an inscription on a white ground, in letters of blue and gold, these words, LOVE, WISDOM, TRUTH. The letters seem to have life in them. There is a flickering, tremulous motion to them, as if formed of numerous diminutive spirits.

Now the presiding spirit speaks, not, indeed, in audible words, but in thoughts which I and all that vast assemblage readily perceive. These are his words:

"I am that I am. Pervading all space, in every particle of matter, from its merest atom to the soul that lives forever, in the universe of worlds that roll far beyond where the human imagination can reach, the spirit of God exists. He has spoken into being this immensity of worlds. At His command laws were instituted that govern them, and through His ministering spirits those laws are executed. Vast as eternity, limitless as space, omnipotent over all created things, all-wise to design, all-powerful to achieve, God was, and is, and ever shall be. How miserable the conception that limits Him to place! How awful the error that clothes Him with the attributes of weak and unprogressing man! Oh! how wild the thought that He can delight in vengeance! Love is His very existence, and it is as vast, as eternal, and immutable as is His very nature."

While he was saying this, the sides of the temple opened and exposed to my view the inconceivable vastness of creation, as if to impress me fully with the thoughts connected with the teaching.

Then he added:

"God is the very spirit of life in every thing; and it is eternally at work sublimating and progressing every particle of matter, from the rudest form to its ultimate end, the immortal spirit of man."

Thus far my attention seemed to be directed to the right side of the temple. Now it is turned to the left. And there, in one part of it, I see that it is colored with light of a claret hue. From where I stand I see it is a room in the second story of the temple, in which are a number of persons all of the same hue, apparently at work. It is approached from the level on which I stand by winding stairs, up and down which people are constantly passing. I enter the room, and there find many persons of both sexes engaged apparently in making garments. There are tables and work-benches around the room. On some of them people are seated at work. At others, they are standing at work. Some are cutting out garments, some

making them, some folding them; and there are shelves on which are piled the cloth and the finished garments. The room is presided over by a tall man of middle age, who recognizes me as one whom I had known on earth. I can not remember who he was, and there seems to be in him a feeling of mortification at my having found him at this employment. All the people in the room are clothed in the garb of earth, and the clothes they are making are of the dark hues of earth. The whole scene is unpleasant to me, and a number of persons whom I had known and disliked on earth are recalled to my recollection. One of them seems to stand close by my side, with a revengeful feeling in him. A somber feeling seems to pervade them all, and it reminds me of a work-shop in the State Prison. I turn to leave it, and discover that there is a whole range of work-shops similarly occupied, extending far down in the distance, each two or three steps below the other, but all visible from where I stand. The whole is so like an earthly scene, that I can hardly tell whether it is a spiritual impression, or my own memory recalling the past. Pray let me inquire of the spirits, through the Doctor, how this is, and if I am right?

It was answered: "The spirits find it hard to impress you. It is late, and the circle is rather tired. Yet a few moments."

I then resumed my observation, and said:

I see now what this is. These are apartments appropriated to the spirits of the sphere below, who have begun to progress, but are not yet in a condition to blend with those of the higher spheres. The shops represent the toil in which they are engaged for the common good, and there does not seem to be much difference from an earthly scene.

Now as I am leaving the shops, and passing out on to the gallery, what an interesting sight is before me! It is the body of an old man, with long, white beard and hair, and a benevolent countenance, lying on the floor of the gallery. He seems to be partly asleep, or, rather, only partly conscious. He is enshrouded in his grave-clothes, and is at-

tended by two bright and loving spirits. One of them is kneeling on one knee, supporting his head in his lap. The other is kneeling at his other side, clasping one of his hands, and waiting for him to arouse to a state of consciousness. They are his grandchildren ; and, as he opens his eyes with increasing consciousness, one of them, who died when he was a child, reduces himself from his full-grown stature to that of a child, that he may be recognized. He was a good man, and they have brought him directly through the lower spheres here to be clad in his spiritual garments. As he recognizes them, they welcome him with countenances full of love and affection, and his response is very marked.

Thus I leave them, and pass rapidly out of the temple, and down to the spirit sitting on the throne, where I am divested of my spiritual garments, with the admonition, "These are not yet yours, but ready for you when next you come;" and so I pass down the mountain, and back to earth again.

Section Forty-three.

Sunday, June 26th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, the circle met, and it was written :

As it may be some time before the whole circle will meet together again, will it not be profitable for us to reflect upon our own motives and action, and especially apply the admonitions uttered by the spirits' teaching to our own hearts? Self-examination is one of the most important duties connected with the spiritual life of man. We desire to know ourselves, and we make ourselves acquainted with the feelings, passions, and inclinations of our minds,

and the use which we have made of all our abilities and opportunities. Thus we are led to question whether indeed we love one another, whether we love that God to whom we are to look as the origin of our own souls and the source of all good; and reflect upon our conduct toward man generally, and the friends by whom we are surrounded, and determine if indeed our hearts soar upward beyond the earth, and if the desire to progress in life is strong enough to enable us to overcome evil with good; whether we deceive ourselves, and if indeed we deceive others.

Candidly, therefore, let us ask ourselves what good we have accomplished, what evil have we rooted up, what happiness have we conferred on others? Have we caused pain, have we knowingly violated friendship, and have we obeyed those moral and physical laws of God which we profess to admire, and by which we avow we are governed?

No life answers its intents that fails sternly to battle with itself, and daringly seeks, by the force of its own elevated desire, to lay up treasures in heaven. Come, then, let your hearts mingle together, and let the union be love and the desire to perpetuate that love till its power shall be felt and its influence recognized by the world as the effect of spirit-communion with spirit—till, in the conscious strength of love without guile, you are ready to lay down the body when its duties are over, and yield up your souls to God who gave them to you. Let us pray in spirit that virtue and grace—the true virtue of an enlightened soul, the grace which shall enable us to withstand our besetting temptations—may be our portion here and our characteristic in the spheres.

Our friends are with us, and they sincerely greet you, and with one desire point you upward and bless you.

SWEEDENBORG.

During the absence of some of the circle the meetings should not be interrupted. The necessity of this injunction will be easily understood. Neither am I willing that the

time should be altered, as all arrangements are made to meet with you on these evenings. And I again suggest that your feelings, your views, and your desires (without discussion) should be interchanged during the sitting; thus you will understand each other, and may be the means of doing much good.

It may not be fully appreciated by you what is the effect of a pure desire to progress in goodness. A few words will not be lost if uttered now. The mind is developed by the causes which impress it. A child surrounded by evil impulses is impressed with that evil, and acts in accordance with the ideas the cause generates. It is not alone that the effect is perceptible on earth, and of that you can judge, but the idea is so connected with his relationship in our world, that even here the effect is manifest in its perceptible influence on the lives and character of spirits themselves.

Could you understand the omnipotency of thought, the thousand ramifications by which it is associated with spiritual and material action, the many links by which it is bound to mind, penetrating even the immense number of worlds scattered through space, and laying under tribute to its demands spirits existing in those bright worlds—whose existence you believe but can not conceive—you would shudder at expressing a thought that was based upon any impression but that which would conduce to the demonstration of virtue or good. Thought, uttered thought, is the tangible evidence of spirit—it is spirit speaking—and though it is derived from the influence of objects scattered through the world, it is no less the expression of the spirit-understanding. All spirits are from one source; they are therefore but emanations of the same principle of which God is the whole; to think, then, wrongly, is to reflect back through the spheres the baleful influence of that thought, and to implicate perhaps the whole spirit-world in its effects. Can you, then, realize the reciprocal connection between the spheres and earth, and the earth

and the spheres; that to us the thoughts of man, and the acts which are the result, may retard or assist our progress; that you may thrust upon us the influence of error and evil, or you may impart to us an impetus which will aid us to rise? or that we, by the force of that reciprocal action, may darken your hearts and cloud your spirits with mistrust and absolute wickedness?

Thus, then, it is not alone that in your strife to overcome evil you shed the bright light of your earthly progress on our pathway too, but in your strong aspirations to cast off evil, to purify your souls, to indeed overcome evil with good, you extend by your spirit-bond the good you have derived to us your spirit-brothers here.

Judge, then, how a noble, a good, a truly elevated thought travels through earth and sphere! Like the almighty essence, of which it is a consociate particle, it pervades mind wherever mind exists, and being good, it develops good in every mind that thinks. Starting either from earth or spheres it vibrates in the extremest bound of creation, and elicits a response which sheds its benign influence on spirit, be it good or be it evil; and wandering from sphere to sphere, trembling in one soul as a light dimly burning, or in another flashing as a glorious star, or beaming as the sun, or mildly as the moon, it leaves its trace a path of goodness, and is received at last by that Spirit whose thought is universal love forever.

SWEEDENBOEG.

Now let us retire; but remember, wherever you are we shall be with you; and oh! do not forget what has been said—do not forget yourselves, do not forget each other; and when we meet again may your reflections be a source of joy, which shall generate joy in every heart. Good-night.

Section Forty-four.

Monday, June 27th, 1853.

At my library, the Doctor and I alone present, it was written :

How many of the emotions of the mind do we find it impossible to analyze ! The various properties characterizing certain feelings are often attributed to other than the right sentiments, and thus impress us with conclusions sometimes unjust, and more often erroneous. While the mind delights in those associations which afford pleasure within itself, it derives no small satisfaction in imparting that property of conferring happiness on those whose sympathies correspond with our own. This condition of life is, indeed, one of true elevation. To possess the power of drafting from our own thoughts those which can be appreciated by others, and which, too, raise other minds far above the ordinary plane of common action, to a correspondence with thoughts approximating to a spiritual life divested of material combination ; to aid by our own efforts the developing mind—take, as under our own wing, the incipient thought, give it shape, and form, and carry it with ourselves far away into regions where the mind has never traversed ; to unfold to sense the beauties of spirit, and to identify all mental action with the thought of spirit in its search after truth, is indeed pleasure.

To develop mind, to generate thoughts where no thought existed before, and to give a freshness and vigor to the mind's requirements which add to its strength, while at the same time they shape it into beauty—can you not, then, realize that you have done good ? Do you not feel that you are, although unconsciously, commencing the work of, your mission ?

Yes, my friend, when tired and weary, when your body shall flag, and your mind stagger under the labor before it; then, then shall the fact that you have given to mind one new aspiration after truth, one desire to progress, give you rest both to body and mind, and this will be the test of your success, for in this will you know that you have conquered ignorance.

BACON.

Early in the evening, I had been telling the Doctor of an interview I had had with ———, and that I had found her mind so changed, so many new thoughts awakened, and, I now asked, if these remarks alluded to that?

It was answered:

It matters not, whether from affection to you, or from a desire to arrive at truth, that the mind is excited to act. If you have created this desire in your friend, will the good that has been done be lost? Have you not opened the gates of the spheres for her entrance, and will they be shut against her claim? No—good is truth, and truth is goodness; therefore the spark that has emanated from your mind will light up a desire in hers, which will never go out until it has burnt up all the errors that a life of the world has created.

Thus have you the application, and it is true; for if I can understand your mind—and I am told by one who watches you that I am correct, that your feelings have been pure, and your pleasure has been pure—your reward will be the satisfaction of leading a mind bound to earth to seek for its happiness in heaven.

Section Forty-five.

Thursday, June 30th, 1853.

The circle met this evening at Dr. Dexter's. Except a brief vision to me, which, being personal, I do not record, the communications were all through Mrs. S. All of them also were personal except one, which was in the following words:

I SEE a great city in the distance; a great, busy place. I see one man coming from that city. He looks old, yet is tall and erect, and his hair is gray. Under his arm he has a roll of paper. He is coming on some important business connected with this place. Some have gone out to meet him. To them he is unrolling his papers, and spreading them out before them. They have found something new there, and look incredulous. They shake their heads and turn away, yet their attention is arrested. They crowd up and look at the papers. They read them, pass an opinion upon them, and turn away. He has shown them what they are, and now his part is done. He therefore turns back to that city, but he leaves the papers behind him. With his back toward me he walks slowly along, in deep meditation, and with his arms folded. He is alone, and no one notices him. They are too earnestly engaged looking at his papers. Now a great crowd has assembled around them, and it is very much excited by something wonderful they have found in them.

Now they are passing them over their heads to their leaders, and spreading them before them, and asking their opinion. If they receive them favorably, the crowd are willing to, but they want their sentiments first. I see some old men, with spectacles on, who are examining them.

They go together in the corner of a large room, and pore over them. Some gather in groups and discuss them; some turn away impatiently, and walk up and down, gravely considering them.

Now I see some of the priests come up to examine them. One of them has found something objectionable. He declaims against it as unlawful. He says it will ruin the people; it will not do to let the people get hold of such doctrines. He is very much excited.

But another one of them is examining them all over very quietly. He has found something beautiful, and points it out to those standing near him. He says, That is a beautiful idea. It has never occurred to him before, and it is worth examining more closely.

Now one of the priests is approaching, so puffed up with pride and self-conceit he won't look at the papers, but turns away with a sneer.

Now some learned men are examining them. They say, Show us the philosophy of this thing, give us the laws which govern it, let us know the science of it.

Now they have all got into a wrangle about it; they dispute, and all talk together.

The crowd who first received it seem to have dropped it, and it is among the educated classes. They disagree about it; some of them want to keep it among themselves, while the crowd are waiting their opinion, and as soon as it is given they will consent, with some exceptions.

Now the papers begin to look large. How they are spread out, and carried round, and commented on. Almost every one has a leaf or a copy. And spirits are standing by their side while they are reading them, though they can not see them.

There is very great excitement among the intellectual classes. They have all got hold of them.

And now approaches again the man who brought the papers. Crowds of people are going to him. They think he must know all about it. Some are inquiring of him,

some are abusing him, calling him all sorts of names. Some shake hands with him, and yet are afraid people shall see them do so. But they seem to think so much of him. Yet he wears the same calm expression of countenance to all. He tells them there are the papers, just as they were given to him, and it is not his fault if they differ from their opinions. They must judge for themselves.

I see one man approaching him, who is very dark and repelling. He threatens him. He would annihilate him if he could, he talks so bitterly. Yet he sits calmly midst it all. Close by him stands a majestic spirit, who sustains and strengthens him. That causes him to look so firm. He loses none of his dignity or self-respect by any thing that dark one has said. He is neither awed nor overcome, but is sorrowful. I see the tear glisten in his eye, as he turns hopeless away.

That dark man is surrounded by a gloomy cloud. He has two or three others with him. He stands up higher than they; but they all feel the chilling influence of that dark cloud, but not with such force and fury as it works on him.

What a storm is raging around him who brought the papers! There is such a dust and confusion around him that I can hardly see him. But he is not forsaken. There is something bright and shining right over him. The storm will not hurt him. He has six or seven people near him. How bad they feel! They are crying, and I see him no more, while the storm rages with more violence than ever.

But ah! now I see him again. There he is, right in the light! The storm has passed away, and he looks happy and pleased. He seems strong and young. Just see how beautiful every thing is since the storm has gone! how many green and beautiful things spring up all around him! The air is clear and balmy. A great many old things have tumbled into ruins, and every thing has a renewed and youthful look. Those who were near him now look so rejoiced. The storm has damaged them some, too, but it has done

them good. Their countenances look clearer and better. He has gone through a great deal, but he has become purer, and looks like an infant. He is so spiritual. He is the image of a good man: serene, joyful, and happy. He was suffering in a good cause, and see what good has come of it.

Now all that excited crowd trouble him no more. He looks so beautiful, fresh, and new. The sun shines so brightly over him, and the birds sing so cheerfully around him.

And now he passes from my sight, in a cloud of glowing light. And so, dear friends, good-night.

Section Forty-six.

Sunday, July 3d, 1853.

Dr. and Mrs. Dexter and Mr. Warren present.

Dr. Dexter was influenced to write as follows:

I AM glad to meet you again, my friends, for many reasons. I am happy to see all my original circle together; for with spirits, as with men, we form friendships which are indeed based on the true affections of the soul. And when we have striven for a long time to open to the mind the beauties and truths of our connection, without success the intimacy begets a deep feeling of interest, especially where we finally accomplish the design of our labor. Thus with you; for a long time I toiled with the Doctor, and I have felt what that yearning of the heart was that actuates his wife; and when, indeed, my labors were triumphant, I was drawn to him and all his family by ties stronger than those of life. I have watched him and his family sometimes

hourly, and have endeavored to direct his thoughts toward those subjects on which his spirit yearned to be satisfied. And I have toiled to diffuse that spirit of harmony among all, which is so important for progression and improvement.

I have never, during my intercourse with you, in any sense, flattered the selfish propensities of your nature. They of themselves are all-powerful, and they usurp the mind when least expected. They maintain possession sometimes under the garb of an earnest desire for independence of thought and action. But when to the soul the true character of these feelings is laid open, it learns how fearfully it has been deceived. For indeed, then, what has been viewed as the spirit's right is found to be the exercise of feelings arising from the predominance of selfishness in thought, word, and action.

My friends, the life given you on earth is one filled with all manner of temptations besetting you on every side, and so varied and multifarious that you are deceived ere you are aware that you have been tempted. What would be the benefit conferred on man by opening to his comprehension all the mysteries of spirit-life and all the beauties of the spheres—revealing the truths belonging to his material and spiritual nature, if we were not able to teach him how that life on earth should be directed; how to govern his passions, how to progress, how to live that his death may be productive of life everlasting in happiness? Could we meet you face to face, and impress on your senses the undoubted evidence of our identity, you might recognize then that you were, indeed, destined to live with us forever, or to dwell in those dark spheres below us, where the light of truth is scarcely manifest. But we come to you, and though believing in our presence, you may yet doubt, and fear that you are deceived. There is the doubt that you may not understand our teachings; and there is the doubt that our teachings may not refer to yourselves personally. Hear me to-night, and let not only your minds understand what I say, but let your hearts open and receive the words

of your spirit-friend. Heart must respond to heart, spirit to spirit. The thoughts that agitate your souls and excite the action of your selfish propensities must be laid under the stern control of your pure desire to love nothing, to know nothing, and to live for nothing but the truth as it is from God; that your hearts, pure and undefiled, may meet the response of those of your friends, that you may indeed bear each other's burdens, and assist each other in your pilgrimage toward and through the spheres.

I greet you in the fullness of love undying; and I charge you to open your thoughts to one another, and to mingle your affections and aspirations together; that together you may wander toward the mark of your high calling, which is the development of the perfection of your natures.

SWEEDENBORG.

Here a pause having ensued, the occasion was taken to ask some questions relative to spirits requiring sustenance, when the following was written:

Mr. Warren, when I said that the sublimation of matter rendered it, as it were, independent of the various influences which govern matter in the gross, I thought I had comprehended all such questions. But these things come under the heads of subjects treated of in the next volume of our teachings, respecting which I have some directions to give, which must be followed.

I have not manifested myself for several days, the reasons for which I will give to Dr. and Mrs. Dexter privately. But to-night I wish to say a few words to you, and wish you to reflect seriously on what I say.

It is not for the purpose of showing to the world that spirits can confer with man, or that God's law obtains in spirit-connection as well as physical, but it is for the purpose of showing you the truths of your spirit-life, after the spirit has left the body, that we leave our high estate and the blissful life of the spheres, and come to earth to teach you.

What do you desire? Can one say, Oh! how my soul is refreshed with the bright visions of progression opened to us by your communications, when he gives way to all the influences of evil thoughts, and renders our teachings of no avail? It is well that your own hearts are brought up before the bar of strict examination, and all the passions and feelings which have governed them are exposed to the searching investigation of truth. You desire that you may, step by step, ascend from one condition to another, leaving behind you the evils and errors of your material nature, till at last you may stand in the presence of those bright spirits whose minds are pure and undefiled before God. Your spirits long for the time when you may wander among the beautiful scenes of the spirit-world, when you may drink up from every object around the truths of nature and of God; when filled with joy inexpressible you may give utterance to thoughts which reach the intense desire for perfection; when divested of every thing impure, the spirit sees in spirit the eternal essence freed from all admixture with earth; when not a thought, not a desire, shall bring back its earthly connection; but filled with love and inspired with wisdom, it lays its grasp even on the footstool of the throne of God, and claims possession as its birth-right! Is this so? Verily, and I believe it. But even if it be so, how does your life on earth correspond? Are you patient? Do you forbear? Are you willing to sacrifice your own feelings and give way to the feelings of others? Do you love purely, justly, and unselfishly?

Can you lay your hands on your hearts and say, I have given no one pain, I have controlled my own nature, and in my desire to progress, in my love for the truth of God I have done to others as I would they should have done unto me? How is it? Is there no lurking desire in your hearts that has led you astray? Have you studied the necessities of another nature, and made just allowance for all its manifestations? Have you loved as God loves—willing to trust, willing to suffer, willing to yield for the sake of

love! Oh! have you brought up the deep motives of your soul and laid them bare to the examination of your own consciousness? I ask in the name of God, have you felt that you have advanced one step toward purity?

These questions behoove us to come at once to the investigation of our propensities. How, then, have you governed what you know to be the controlling influences of your nature? Can you say, In the life I have led I have shown to the world my faith in spirits by following the directions they have given us? Can it be possible that the world will believe that spirits can communicate with man, and that communication is for good, when the great and glorious truths which we reveal are hidden by your own lives and denied by your own conduct? You will say, I have tried; yes—and I believe you; but have you shut your ears to the demands of self, and alone opened your understandings to the truths of God? Reflect for a moment.

Here ensued a pause, in which some remarks were made and some desultory conversation held, when the writing was resumed.

Life is forever—and forever must that life struggle. Forever must the desire for good be paramount to the demands of evil. Were it not so, there would be no progression. Why it is so, we shall learn when we stand in the celestial spheres, gods in wisdom and in perfection. But as the spheres are above, so must be our spirit-flight, soaring on the wings of divine love, and wafted by the breezes of earnest and truthful desires. Thus, when we have triumphed over the influences of matter, we become the causes which govern and control it; or, indeed, the instrument by which the divine laws are executed.

All nature is not alike, but in all nature is the principle of good, instead of the principle of evil. The cares of life are the evils which beset us; and there are others with which we have to battle. But as I have asked in love, for your self-examination, I tell you in love to go on, for the day is not far distant when, eye to eye and face to face, you

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shall have the tangible demonstration of what I have told you ; and your souls shall feel that one triumph over self is a victory which enhances not alone *your* happiness, but gives speed to the footsteps of those who precede you here, and will give to your spirit-life a joy I can not explain.

But, above all, let your hearts open to one another. In the interchange of thought for thought you shall find how much you are bound one to another, how much you can assist one another, and how much love there is in the human heart.

Some remarks were made, when it was added :

I am glad you have contested my remarks. I will explain. Do you not, when you are charged with doing or saying any thing which conflicts with the opinions of others, or when your own opinions are opposed, feel that after all you are right, and have the *consciousness* of feeling that you are right ? Do you not in this forget that others may feel just as you feel ?

If you will analyze your hearts, you will find my words true.

I have nothing more to say, but that you all should examine yourselves. What I have written is for thought, for earnest, deep reflection ; and I trust, when next we meet, you will give me an expression of your feelings on what I have written.

Section Forty-seven.

Sunday Evening, July 10th, 1853.

Present, Dr. and Mrs. Dexter and Mr. Warren. Dr. Dexter was influenced, and the following was written through his hand:

WHEN in some moment of life when the soul asserts its supremacy and controls the natural tendencies of our material nature; when catching in its aspirations a glimpse of its glorious destiny it pours forth gushing from itself the finer feelings of its spirit-origin we yield to the claims it asserts, then the heavens, studded with its bright stars, offer a lesson at once divine and full of wisdom. We watch some star whose twinkling rays penetrate to our hearts, and we feel the soul springing forth from its body and, rising upward, speed its way toward that star, as if it were its home. We people it with our friends, and we clothe its mountains and valleys with woods and grass and herbs and flowers and murmuring streams, and birds that flit from tree to tree and sing their songs of love. In some fair spot, sheltered by a lofty mountain, surrounded by shady trees and bathed by a gurgling brook, we locate our home. There, where the air is filled with the fragrance of flowers, and echoing the songs of birds; there, where the sun ever shines, and the landscape eternally presents new beauties to attract; there, where the soul feels that it is free to act itself, bound by no observance of form or custom, do we meet with those friends whom on earth we loved most, and in whose hearts we found our own identity. Yes, we look at that star and watch its sparkling, as if every twinkle was a sign of love, and bid our spirit revel in the scene its own yearnings have called up. We watch, but it

is the vigil of the weary spirit tired of the hard realities of life, knowing its prerogatives, and making tangible its sympathies. To us the vigils we keep on earth elicit feelings assimilating with the spirit's watch. Oh! when we have left our homes, and the bright, the inconceivable glories which there exist, drawn by the irresistible desire to instruct, to teach the truths, to us made certain; when weary with effort and tired with the vain complainings, the severe reproaches, the unjust charges, and the foolish bickerings of our dearest friends, we look upward and behold our star shining amid the works of God, then our hearts feel what the instinctive action of the soul must be. The soul! its birthright is the whole of nature. Yes, beyond the spirit's range, above its conceptions, far, far away to the east and the west—to the north and the south—with worlds on worlds, and spheres on spheres—where the light of suns unnumbered develop the mighty manifestations of its Father and its God—where reign worlds bright and dazzling, and exceeding even the wildest dreams of spirit-enthusiasm; filled with beings more brightly beautiful than beauty's impress on the image of its Creator; yes, again yes, where the thought stretched beyond itself tries in the vain attempt to calculate, is the soul's heritage—its eternal birthright. It claims it all. It owns no confinement, it recognizes no barrier, but in its progress lays its hand on all as its own! Can *we*, then, who have just stepped over the threshold of this inconceivable heritage, and have witnessed its relationship with nature, soul, and God, can we hesitate, then, in face of our difficulties, our trials, our disappointments, still to go on? No, with us the beginning is the end; for its commencement is the never-ceasing effort till the mission is past.

Thus, then, come I to-night, looking to my work on earth as the star which I people with souls emancipated from error and clothed with truth; ushered into a liberty of eternity, and filled with a desire that leads to God.

I salute you and I bless you. There are sympathies con-

necting spirit on earth with spirit in the spheres. This sympathy binds us together. In it are love, truth, and eternity.

SWEEDENBORG.

A pause occurred here, when the conversation turned on *progress*, and it was observed, that we often see but little improvement in an individual in a lifetime. The writing was then resumed.

I imagine that what is termed progress is but imperfectly understood. The remark you made, Mr. Warren, is comparatively true. Man, on earth, manifests but little of the progress he has made, even in a lifetime exceeding the age of man. The reason is obvious. The soul's progress is in itself. How far the material surroundings may be cultivated I do not pretend to say, but that his organs alone obscure the positive advance that the soul has made, I verily believe. One obstacle to the direct observation of what may be the progress of spirits is fear of the ridicule of the world. The finest, the tenderest feelings of the heart are those most commended in man, but they are those most satirized. Few men have the boldness to avow that the older they grow the more they appreciate what belongs to themselves and their race. Thus, confined in bondage worse than slavery, they suffer the soul to develop itself, unknown, unacknowledged, and unconfessed. But miserly though this may be, the gems thus hoarded up in life pass current in eternity.

Progress is the inception of truth and love, and the consequent development of the desires and affinities which correspond to these two principles. A soul progressing obtains one idea by which it is placed in position and location to associate with others who have also learned the same; and they develop together an idea still more in advance. Thus they progress on the mind's inception alone. But freed from all restraining influences here, the spirits act as well as conceive, and thus, step by step, they traverse the spheres, till at last they reach the eternal idea, the divine embodiment, and are perfect even as God is perfect.

A conversation here ensued, arising out of the last remarks. Allusion was made to the idea advanced by some spirits that we should all progress until a certain point, where, becoming Godlike, we should lose our identity by absorption into the Godhead, whereupon it was written as follows :

And you will never lose your identity. If God designed to absorb all souls into himself, there would have been no necessity at first to give off from himself distinct identical germs, possessing all the characteristics of independence. Therefore, as every spirit is independent in his mind and its exercise, how could God contravene his own institutes ? That is impossible, and from this I reason.

I shall not keep you up much longer. The excessive heat under which you are all laboring retards free manifestation ; but if you wish to ask questions, I will answer.

A pause having occurred, a discussion arose as to how spirits could pass through solid substances ; and it was asked how it was possible for a spirit, clothed in garments, to pass through solid matter, unless the garments possessed the same aptitude with the spirit's body, of uniting when severed, by their own inherent power. In answer to this and the conversation generally, it was written :

In the first place your ideas of spirit-body—of the advanced spirit, are as crude as matter. Spirit-body or spirit-matter is intangible ; and it is so sublimated that it is like electricity almost. We do not pass grossly through matter, but we *will*, and like a current of electricity, we pervade matter. Our clothing is adapted to our conditions, and thus we are able to take with us what is on us. Spirit passing through matter is like the life which is in all things, or like the influence of God's power on all material things.

Of course I refer alone to the higher spirits. There are such who can exist in matter, and pervade its every part with their own organization.

This is my explanation. Good-night.

Section Forty-eight.

Thursday, July 14th, 1853.

Present, Dr. and Mrs. Dexter and Mr. Warren.

Dr. Dexter was, after a long delay, influenced (he being somewhat indisposed), and the following was written :

How difficult it is to control the working of the human breast, and how fruitless are all our attempts to reduce thought to the arbitrary restraints of sect or society ! There is a feeling paramount in every mind, that the sentiments which govern our own characters are either misunderstood by others or intentionally misrepresented, that our feelings are pure, that we ourselves are willing to yield to the peculiarities of others, and that we try to add to the comfort and happiness of others by whom we are surrounded. Perhaps this may be so, and I doubt not there are those who strive to subdue their own inclinations, and whose earnest wish is to make others happy. This labor with our own passions must be productive of good, must root out the lurking evils of our own nature. But, alas ! that even in this effort to subdue the mind's propensities there should be at times as much of evil as of good. It is not enough, that we strive to regenerate the tendencies of our own natures ; it is not enough that we toil for our own perfection, If we disregard the feelings of others if engrossed in ourselves we do not recognize the trials, the troubles, the perplexities, the cares, and anxieties of others, the struggles and desires to do right, and the irresistible force of compelling circumstances that direct the action into other channels than the one intended ; if we do not penetrate

beneath the surface, and unfold the ceaseless efforts in another mind to accomplish the same results as we ourselves design.

Oh ! how the heart, earnest and sincere, striving to advance, and yet bound by circumstances which it can not control—how this heart, alive, yes, sensitively alive to every thing good, seeing beyond the limits of its own action the bright and beautiful home for which it yearns—how, I say, does it shrink within itself, frozen with the cold reply or the repelling look, when even that word or look is from one to whom that spirit wished to minister for good.

Friends, man is the veriest creature of circumstance, controlled by causes and influences which almost in spite of himself direct his actions on earth. Deal tenderly, then, with that spirit who, bowed down by the weight of care unknown, hideth his bitterest troubles in his own breast, that he alone may suffer. Gently regard all his doings. Credit him for the deep susceptibilities of heart, and learn that to him no sacrifice is too great, could he make you to know how hard the struggle with self, that he may endure troubles in silence, that there may be no cloud between others and happiness. It is the warm sunshine and the gentle rain that vivify the seed, and bring forth the fruit and the flower. God's goodness is gentle, it is tender. In his merciful provision, in the due execution of his laws, he has arranged every thing for the good of man. He has with the practical given us the beautiful. Can you look on the earth when first the morning sun greets the mountain and the dale, the ocean and the lake, and witness its bright beams stealing over tree and shrub, gilding their branches with golden light, and infusing into every dew-drop that kisses leaf or flower the brilliancy and dazzling beauty of the diamond, and behold the mighty influence of its gentle beams, as from the sky it chases the darkness of night, and comes in glorious pomp with red and gold, and pink and purple, throwing its radiant mantle on its pathway through the heavens, and giving to every plant, and tree, and

flower, and the humble grass, new beauties and deeper tints to herald its coming?

Hear the joyous birds—their gushing notes fill the air and merrily bid it welcome. The cold chills of night give place to the warm breath of morning, and then from rose, from violet, from hawthorn, and from mignonnette there ascends the perfume of celestial day. Earth hums its grateful greetings, all creeping things murmur thanks, and the sparkling brooklet as it leaps from stone to stone laughs out glad thanks, and dashes on in joy; the cattle on a thousand hills bellow forth their notes of praise. Man looks up, the sky is beaming in its radiant glory—he looks on earth in its deep robe of green, and it reflects back its tints. He looks again, and again he looks—earth, heaven, birds, flowers, and all created things, are stamped with the impress of its glorious light, so gentle, so calm, scarce breathing life, and yet so strong in their several powers, all yield to its influence and all respond to its might. What would be the effect if it came scorching and drying up the earth, burning and destroying and blighting every thing in its course?

My friends, seek in other hearts the image of your own, and so shall you soothe the weary, tired spirit, so shall you comfort and restore. I bless you.

SWEEDENBORG.

Section Forty-nine.

Sunday, July 24th, 1853.

Last evening, after an absence of about three weeks in the country, I returned home, and met the circle at Dr. Dexter's; he, Mr. Warren, and I alone being present.

The Doctor was soon influenced, and wrote :

I FEEL at home once again. I confess I do not like traveling and the Western scenery. But I have interfered to say one word of greeting to those present, and to assure them that I am glad to meet with them once more. Sweedenborg suggests that some subject should be proposed in which your minds have been engaged for the evening's business. With this I am agreed; and now, as time is precious, let us all go to work with a will, and accomplish what is before us. In love, BACON.

He added

Sweedenborg wants the last communication read.

And it was so done. It was then written in another handwriting.

When we are daily meeting with our friends, their society becomes a matter of common habit; but when we are for a time separated we feel their absence, and regret the loss of their society. But when again we are united, our affection seems to be renewed, and a new pleasure occupies our hearts, and we rejoice with them and with ourselves. Judge, I welcome you back, and I am filled with pleasure that your journey has been so satisfactory. I can not believe that you will encounter more of the revilings of the world than you have received when your back was turned to the faces of the foes of truth. Truth fears no foe. It seeks no covert

place from whence to sound forth its claims. It is ignorance and prejudice that, lurking in secret haunts and dark places, hurl their envenomed shafts at those who advocate the freedom, right, and justice of truth. I grasp your hand, and I feel in so doing I meet the returning pressure of an honest man.

Friends, I bless you, and bid you God-speed in all your acts.

SWEEDENBORG.

Mr. Warren here alluded to some teachings which he had lately seen, and which purported to be from Swedenborg, and he desired to know if they were from him?

It was answered :

Let it be understood, once for all, that since I have been permitted the use of the Doctor's hand, I have not written any thing through a y person's hand, except, perhaps, an answer to some question, or a greeting to some individual for whom I have a particular friendship. I have felt it important that I should refrain from promiscuous writing, that it might give more authority to our work, and that the Doctor might be satisfied that what I said to him two years since was true.

After a pause, it was added :

Judge, are you able to be impressed for a few moments? I will try and explain why there are so many communications purporting to be from me, by showing to your mind the reasons.

I replied, Yes, I felt very well. And I withdrew my thoughts from external objects in order to aid them. In a short time a train of thought was thrust upon my mind, which I followed for a while, when I asked, Am I right in my conception of your ideas? and it was answered through the Doctor:

Go on; we will tell you as you proceed.

I then gave utterance to the following :

It is now about one hundred years since Swedenborg proclaimed to the world that he had personal intercourse with the spirit-land. It was the first instance since the days of Jesus that spirit-communication to such an extent

had been known among men. There had been occasional instances during the previous fifteen or sixteen centuries, in which there had been spirit-intercourse, in which the spirits had made repeated attempts to open communion with man. But the intercourse through him, proclaimed to the world by him, was of a more extended and marked character, and had attracted the attention of mankind to a greater degree than any thing since the Crucifixion. When he died, unlike most men, when he entered the spirit-world, he knew all about the existence on which he entered, in consequence of his previous experience. He at once discovered how much of what he had taught was true, and how much erroneous; and how much it would benefit mankind if the knowledge he had acquired when in the body could be diffused abroad among them generally. In this respect he was far ahead of many who had long preceded him in their entrance into the spirit-land. He felt it to be at once his mission to endeavor to extend that knowledge, in order that he might elevate man from the depression with which ages of ignorance, bigotry, and superstition had afflicted him. He therefore devoted himself exclusively to that object, and sought for aid throughout the whole spirit-world; reasoning with some, importuning others, demonstrating to inquiring minds the reality of which they had no conception; calling on philosophers for their assistance, and upon affection for its aid; in fine, invoking throughout by considerations not only affecting man's elevation upon earth, but his elevation and happiness in the next sphere, their coöperation in this great work. This labor of his was conducted with the earnestness that could flow only from the most settled and thorough conviction of the reality and practicability of spiritual intercourse.

That conviction which attended him in his passage from this world to the spirit-land was increased a thousand-fold by what he witnessed there.

It is important to notice here, that these untiring and strenuous efforts of his, causing him to range far and near,

high and low through the regions of space, necessarily caused him to be known to vast numbers of spirits, as being engaged in that work, and as having had experience in his earthly life. But when he had succeeded in attracting the attention of spirits to the subject to an extent sufficient to insure adequate coöperation, it became primarily a subject of inquiry, *How it was to be done.*

The mere proclamation through one or a few persons, it had already been discovered in his own case, amounted to little or nothing. To a few only could a knowledge of it be brought home, and with fewer still could any belief be produced. The very slight progress of the Sweedenborgians for a hundred years is evidence of that. Hence the importance of the inquiry, *How was it to be done?* Man was so sensuous, so material, so mere animal in his nature, that the mere address of mind to mind could not effect the great purpose in ages.

Even the teachings of Jesus, if they had been, like Sweedenborg's, unaccompanied by any thing addressing itself to man's animal nature, would have been almost as ineffectual as his. The miracles, as they were called, which attended the mission of Jesus, were powerful if not essential elements in the propagation of his doctrines. Hence it was apparent that some mode of reaching man's physical perceptions must be devised, and that not through one person only, as in the case of Jesus, or through a few—a score or two, as in the case of his immediate disciples—but, if possible, through great numbers; thus not only diffusing the knowledge abroad among men, but affording the most satisfactory evidence against the charge of collusion. And it was reasoned that, as in the case of Jesus and his disciples, in the case of Sweedenborg himself, and in the case of others through whom spiritual communications had been made in past times, a peculiar condition of their physical nature had allowed it, so that same condition existing in many others, as it necessarily must, might be availed of to effect the great end in view. Therefore the first direction

of the minds engaged in this work was to affect the greatest number of those whose physical condition would permit them to be affected. Clairvoyance and psychometry were something toward it, paving the way, as it were, like John in the wilderness; but still there was wanting the evidence addressed to the senses, which man's physical condition so imperatively required. At length, through the combined efforts of those engaged in the work, and chiefly through the practical philosophy of FRANKLIN, the mode of communication by *raps* was discovered. When at length it was learned on earth that a communication could be had with spirits by rappings (and it was a considerable time after the discovery had been made in the spheres), then the spirits sought out others whose physical condition permitted the raps to be heard through them also, and thus rapping mediums were noticed in other sections of the country. At first, as you will all remember, this spirit-intercourse was held almost entirely by rappings. Various other phases of it, now known, have gradually grown up since then, and are the result of the progress thus far made.

When the mode of communication by raps was discovered, it was manifested in this country in preference to any other, for two reasons. First, it was the country of *Franklin*. Second, this country was in the enjoyment of greater mental freedom than existed in any other part of the world, or had ever been known in it; for here man was free to investigate whatever he pleased, because truth was left free to combat it. As the intercourse through *physical* manifestations extended and progressed, and men became believers in spiritual intercourse, they became (by virtue of a law whose existence and operation the wiser spirits know full well) more and more capable of being approached by spirits, until moral or mental manifestations (call them which you will) have extended and are extending to a still wider range than physical manifestations have ever obtained. Thus vast numbers have been found in this sphere of existence, through whom, either by mental or physical mani-

festations, disembodied spirits have been able to communicate with man in the form. Now this has not been by a miracle, a prodigy, a special providence, or the suspension of God's immutable laws, but it has been in accordance with, and in execution of those laws. Hence the power of spirits out of the body to commune with spirits in the body is not confined to a few, but belongs to all, as a part of their nature.

There may, it is true, be exceptions of spirits too material and gross to approach up to the level of your stage of existence; but, with that exception, all in the spirit-world, whether wise or foolish, progressed or undeveloped, vicious and evil-disposed, or virtuous and holy, can alike exercise the prerogative of communing.

As the knowledge of this new discovery was diffused abroad among the inhabitants of the spirit-world, it was received by them with an interest far more intense than any of which you can conceive; and is strongly in contrast with the obstinate blindness with which mankind in this sphere receive it.

Many spirits, bound to the earth by the strong ties of attachment for those whom they have recently left, are anxious to commune with them. Many who have too long ago passed from earth to have any such personal ties, are still drawn to earth by the propensities which have marked their life here, and which still linger around them. Some wish to commune from an unselfish desire to alleviate the condition of mankind. Others, alas! feeling still the passions which tainted their mortal career, desire to commune in gratification of their fear, their hatred, their envy, or their jealousy. And, I repeat, that as the reality of spiritual intercourse was the natural result of man's progression, all these various classes of spirits could commune, the one as well as the other.

But many found this difficulty. Mankind had so long been in the habit of bowing to the authority of names, that neither mediums, nor persons in the flesh communicating

through them, were willing to receive communications unless they bore the sanction of some great or distinguished name, or some name which would of itself have influence upon medium or interrogator. For instance, how often have you yourselves seen when a spirit has attempted to communicate, that the first question was, "Who are you?" Not what do you teach? but who are you? And how often have you seen, when an unknown name has been given, that the spirit has been repelled and not permitted to commune at all! Now this has been observed in the spirit-world over and over again, and the knowledge of it extends all through and among those who have attempted to have communion. And those who have either had a name that was odious among men, or one obscure and unknown, have found that by this besetting propensity of man to worship the authority of name, they were to be entirely excluded from the privilege of intercourse if they attempted to do so in their own name. And this privilege, so much more highly prized by them than you, they were to be deprived of by your perverseness, if they truly told you who they were.

It is not strange, therefore, that very many, either from an over-anxiety to commune, or from a careless disregard of what they deemed a trivial falsehood, assumed false names; and among all those who have been falsely personated, there has been no one more frequently so than Swedenborg; for the simple reason, that there is no one in the spirit-world so generally known as him as identified with this new discovery. And many of those who assume his name do not know but that on earth, among you, he is regarded in the same light in connection with this matter. Hence they so often take his name, and because they suppose it will be the most acceptable to you.

Let it be not supposed, however, that all those who thus falsely assume his name intend to teach falsehood, or to make a statement in any other respect untrue. They perceive that the price they must pay for communing is this false personation, apparently harmless to them, for they

can not help asking themselves, Why do men care so much more for name than for substance? But they intend in all else to teach truthfully as far as they know. Some, indeed, having learned what Sweedenborg did teach, suppose they are teaching exactly his doctrine now. But there are some who, for mischievous purposes, assume a false character, and teach false doctrine to deceive and mislead.

Out of this general statement the danger of spiritual intercourse may be discovered. Out of these crudities and false teachings the truth must be sifted, as must often be done in mere mundane matters. We have but one guide, but one protector against the errors which may thus mislead. That guide is the free, unbiased, candid exercise of our reason; that protector is purity of intention, holiness of thought, and a firm reliance upon the providence of God.

After the communication had been given, we got into conversation about our forthcoming publication, and it was written:

Friends, there needed some policy in arranging the matter for the first volume of our work. At first it was intended only that I should teach the general ideas connected with the spirit-world, but as we found the Doctor willing and susceptible, Bacon and others concluded to connect other thoughts with my teachings, and thus we have written what we have. If we had particularized every thing in relation to the spheres, it would have made a volume too large, and perhaps would have been monotonous. We have written enough to excite the popular appetite for more; and when we commence our second volume, we will then answer all your minute questions, and specially devote a certain time to the explanation of all your queries. I hope this will satisfy, and thus good-night.

SWEEDENBORG.

Section Fifty.

Monday, July 25th, 1853.

This evening, at my library, Dr. Dexter and I alone present, it was written :

WERE I to greet you to-night with the ordinary salutation of meeting, it would not express the feelings which move me to-night toward yourself, Judge, or the Doctor. But more especially toward yourself are my feelings running over with affection, and I am forced by the strange circumstances surrounding you, to show more than usual sentiment in addressing you, as much for the purpose of assuring you that the spirits of just men made perfect are aware of the charges made against you by vicious wicked men, as to manifest an intention to give you that kind of support and assistance the present occasion demands.

Judge, it is not always, as you have experienced in a career somewhat checkered, that a sincere desire to do good is rewarded with the approbation of those from whom you would most expect to receive approval. There is too much suspicion in the minds of even great men of the motives to award praise for a sound and successful virtuous effort, let that effort be directed toward whatever object it will most conduce to perfect. Man in his general characteristics looks on the mind which has launched out into unknown waters, and proudly and determinedly sought from the deep profundity some new continent on which to plant the standard of truth, as if it were an adventure entirely selfish. He can not reconcile the apparent motive to those which govern his own actions. Thus there is, even in the most intelligent, a desire to invest with attributes of

perverse selfishness all attempts to subdue error. But this is a story you already have learned. It only remains for me to say, that the cause is strong enough to support its most obscure believer. There is always in the human heart the responsive certainty of doing right, and always a like certainty when wrong is committed. In your heart, to-night, the jewels most prized are glittering in the light of a virtuous intent, and the refraction on the world will exhibit how much is the value thereof to yourself and the world.

BACON.

I here remarked, how strong, during the whole day, and now my affection for him was glowing.

It was answered :

Well, Judge, in your own heart you realize the feelings of mine. Minds disciplined alike are sure, when brought in contact, to adhere closely by the force of innate affinity.

The same subjects which would have interested me when on earth, would, and do interest you, and in the whole of your life you exhibit in some respects the same sort of characteristics which gave form and personality to my own. And permit me to say that the longer we converse, and the more our thoughts are brought out and compared together, the deeper will be our affection, and the more endearing our friendship. But to you both, and I am not accustomed to express much feeling, I say, that if love uninfluenced by a worldly or selfish motive is worthy your acceptance, you have mine in truth, and for God eternally.

Section Fifty-one.

Wednesday, August 3d, 1853.

This evening, Judge Fowler (for twelve years one of the Circuit Judges of the State of Kentucky) was sitting in my library with me. Dr. Dexter came in, and after conversing for two hours on the subject of spiritual intercourse, to which the Judge said his attention had been originally drawn by my first publication on the subject, I asked if we might not hear from our spirit-friends, who were doubtless present.

In a few moments the Doctor was influenced, and wrote as follows

I CAN NOT have any thing special to say to your friend from Kentucky, but I feel gratified that men occupying exalted positions like himself are investigating and believing the truth of spirit-intercourse. It is not sufficient that men believe, that they acknowledge there is no deception in the phenomena they witness; truth admits of no half-way interest; it requires, when once a man is satisfied, that he shall seek to disseminate that truth, and afford to others the same benefit he receives from the adoption.

The question asked in your letter, Judge E., is of great importance, *Cui bono?* What, indeed, is the object of this new revelation? It is certain that a mere belief in the upside-down tipping of a table can be of no vital benefit to any individual or to his race. Tables may be moved and raps may be heard, but these evidences of a power not materially existing in this world can satisfy no thinking man if there were not something beyond all this worthy of being understood. Now, what is this? It is that man has not been taught his true relation even to the life he now enjoys, or his connection with that other state of existence beyond the grave. Educated after the fashion of some one sect,

men imbibe certain notions characterizing that sect, which are not absolute revelations from God, or even predicated on his laws, but are the positive creations of mind materially influenced, and thus do not in the least exemplify the design of our existence or the purpose of death. If the laws of God had not been instituted for a purpose as important as his character is omnipotent, there probably would have been some different manifestation of life than that which now gives significance to the whole material creation. But death was just as much of an object following life, as was the gift or establishment of life itself. Therefore death was to be understood, or, at least, should be, for one great idea belonging to death has scarcely been apprehended, or, in fact, appreciated. Death is the continuance-life; it is life without the restraints imposed upon it by the limits of a single planet. Now, though it is important that the designs of life should be investigated and understood, it certainly is of as much importance that that life in its continuance should be perfectly appreciated, for the one is of short duration, and the other is for eternity. This, then, is the object of spirit-communion, and it behooves all believers to understand what they believe, that when satisfied themselves they may be able to satisfy others.

BACON.

Section Fifty-two.

Tuesday, August 23d, 1853.

This evening, in my library, among other things it was written :

Now we will try and give you our views of the true mission of Christ on the earth. And in reminding you of what was before said of our reasons, we again say to you that we are giving our opinions—opinions formed from the circumstances existing in the spheres where we dwell, the facts which come under our observation, and the ideas gleaned from those spirits in advance of us, who occasionally have intercourse with us.

Turn your mind back to the moral condition of the world at the time Christ was said to be born. You find the whole Jewish nation agitated upon the present fulfillment of certain prophecies made by men called prophets, who taught that at or about this time there would be born into the world a man who would restore the glory of the Jewish kingdom, and establish a dynasty which would exist forever. They ascribed to this personage attributes at once both earthly and divine—a being who would subdue all the nations who had oppressed their race, and found again their kingdom on a basis which would be supported by God. Mingled with this belief was the idea that this man would partake of a nature so pure that he would change the whole moral aspect of the times, and would emphatically be called the Son of God. Their wise men had predicted his coming, and had iterated his birth at a certain time, and had in a manner (mysterious it is true) calculated the precise period of its advent hundreds of years before his coming.

I doubt not that this person, foreshadowed by the proph-

ets, had, from the accepted belief of the whole Jewish people that he was indeed to come at a certain period, come to be also recognized as the future king of the Jews, by the nations surrounding them, and with whom they had commercial or other intercourse.

Thus the impression was kept up by this outside belief of the truth of the prediction of the Jewish prophets; and when the time had arrived prophesied by their wise men as the period of his birth, the Gentiles, as they were called, likewise looked for some glorious appearance of a being, part man and part God, who would restore the glory of the Jewish monarchy to far more than its original power and grandeur.

We often reason from hearsay evidence, and bring our minds to admit as fact what is derived from the notions and belief of others. Thus, I doubt not, the idea of this two-fold nature of Christ was admitted by all nations to whom the peculiar religion of the Jews was known. At that time the communication between different nations was limited, and the ideas of government, religion, and the habits and customs of this people were but partially understood. It requires frequent and constant intercourse of man with man properly to understand his peculiarities and all his characteristics. Does not this hold true in reference to national communication?

But the Jewish priesthood were a jealous race, tenacious of their power, and exercising an unlimited control over the minds of the people. They, from the first, apprehended that their authority would be circumscribed, and that their influence also would be contracted. They could not submit to a limitation of a power which had been for ages universal, and it became a matter of serious import to them that the very nature of Christ's mission should be misunderstood. Thus when we are told that Christ was to be born, we are also told that he was to elevate the people, he was to institute laws which would restore the might and power of the nation, and he was to rule as king, possessing powers

derived from and almost equal to God. It was the policy of the priests to inculcate the material mission of Christ, the establishment of a material kingdom, and the institution of laws which should affect the material condition of the nation alone.

They perverted the prophecies; and instead of avowing his mission to be that of the reformation of his race morally, they made Christ a mere ruler, whose power and might was to be directed to the upbuilding of their nation, and the regathering of its people. It is not strange, therefore, that when Christ was born in the lowly manger, that he was not recognized by priest or noble, that he was insulted, reviled, and at last crucified. It is not strange, either, that his true mission was by the masses misunderstood, and that when he stood in the highways and byways, discoursing on the true nature of man, his duties to himself, to others, and to the world, he could not be comprehended by those who expected him in pomp, in glory, and with all the power and magnificence of a sovereign. It was not singular that when he taught the common people in the groves by the side of Jordan, or on the mountains overlooking Jerusalem, that when he traced life from the little child to the developed man on your earth, and pointed out all that belonged to him as a man, and then from life to death, indicating in words and terms which the world has not yet understood, though two thousand years have passed since their utterance, that from life to death man progressed, and from death through eternity it was still progression alone that was to develop his nature, that he was then as now misunderstood. To ascertain what was the true mission of Christ, we should attentively consider the character of the man as given in sacred history, and also in profane, and view his daily life and action in reference to the great work he was called to perform. The earliest indication of any positive ministration was his teachings in the temple when yet a child, and when he confounded the Priest and the Pharisee. At this time he reasoned of life, death, and eternity, and the ground-

work of all his teachings was, that the moral purity of man's life on earth was the guarantee of his happiness after death. From this period until the time of his death he sought out every opportunity to utter those sentiments; and were we to take the sermon on the Mount as the solitary evidence in support of our argument, we should triumphantly claim that Christ's mission was the reformation of the moral condition of the world; that he taught all that we teach; that love, purity, truth on earth, are the incipient steps of progression; that eternity develops no sentiments more consonant with the nature of God than progression from these principles. The simple parable of the Pharisee and the Sinner is pertinent proof of the truth of what I teach. The Pharisee, satisfied with himself, desired no advance, but thanked God he was not like other men; but the Sinner, conscious of his shortcomings, convicted of sin, and of righteousness, and of a judgment to come, besought God to be merciful, to open to his mind the truths it behoved him to know, and to assist him in his earnest endeavors to progress in all goodness from life through death, onward through the spheres. What other interpretation can be given of this simple story related by Christ? The Sinner lifting up his eyes afar off, cried, God, be merciful! Merciful for what? That he might understand how to live, that his death might usher him into the liberty of life everlasting.

But what was the effect of Christ's teaching on earth? He says, I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. Let us ask what this fulfilling means? Does it not mean the fulfillment of the great design for which man was created? Before his advent, the world's conscience was pinned on the sleeve of the priesthood; their faith was the faith of all, and what they chose to inculcate as religion or truth was implicitly recognized and accepted by the people. What did Christ teach? He taught men to examine their own hearts, that by the fruits of a man's life was his moral condition to be tested. He says, Can a good tree bring forth evil fruit? Can the association with evil develop good? No; he

charges his disciples to be humble, and merciful, and truthful, to regard others in all the relations of life as they would be regarded when similarly circumstanced. He presents the spirit as a part of God, and says it was from God in the beginning, and he requires that spirit to be pure even as God is pure, that it might dwell with the Father forever.

The apostle, recognizing this principle, avows that man must work out his own *salvation* with fear and trembling. What can be the meaning of these words, "Work out our own salvation?" Yes; and it is a work of no little moment; it is the struggle with that which is impure in our natures, the eradication of error, the progress in good.

Christ taught the doctrine of forgiveness, and when asked when man should pray, and for what he should pray, he refers him to God. He does not associate himself in any way with the adoration of the Father, but says, Our Father which art in heaven.

In every act of Christ, in every reference made to his power, or to the power of God, he distinctly refuses to be regarded as any other than a man and the son of man.

True, he says, I and the Father are one, but he conclusively refers to the accomplishment of the object for which he came on earth; that in spirit they assimilated, he in the holy and intense desire to elevate his race, and God in the boundless benevolence by which he had permitted man this opportunity for progression.

Even when arrested in the garden he says, I could pray to my Father, and he would send legions of angels to my aid; emphatically here he admits no power belonging to himself—he refers every thing to God.

It would be useless to cite more evidence on this part of the question. What, then, is the conclusion? Christ, foretold by the prophets, was born of woman, a man designed for the elevation of his race in the promulgation of the truths which the darkness, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness of the world had obscured from man's understanding. Teaching him that, sprung from God, he was placed on earth to

develop here the properties which were to assist him in his progress through eternity ; to open to man the high destiny of his soul ; to reform the moral abuses of the world ; to inculcate those divine principles that progress here, entails progress hereafter ; to reveal to the blunted understanding of his race that the virtuous, the good, the pure, the benevolent, the charitable, and the merciful were of God, and of course laid claim to the kingdom of heaven. He taught the faith we teach, and in every particular Christ was a spiritualist, for he inculcated the stern lesson, that unless the spirit was pure, no act would be accepted for good. He said that the spirit defiled was like a whited sepulcher, fair without, but within filled with dead men's bones.

The application of this statement I leave for others. Christ opened the portals of the dark grave, and exposed the life beyond as one of progress. He brought man near to God, and bid him understand his connection with the Father. His conditions were, Repent, and in this he sums up all of spiritual doctrines. Repentance is progress, and progress the eternal happiness of the spirit.

You have thus my opinion on the mission of Christ. It should be recollected that the dark mysteries which shrouded the very God from the just idea which should have been disseminated of his attributes to the people, were in exact accordance with the same principles through all time, which have exerted so baleful an influence on man's progress since and before the advent of our Saviour. Let us understand the true nature of his mission, let us divest ourselves of all blind adherence to sect, and seek out from nature the true design of our creation. Christ found a world buried in ignorance. No true idea had been given of their destiny ; and not until he dispelled the darkness which shrouded his whole moral nature did man make the effort to understand his true relationship to himself, the world, or to God. Looking back to Christ, we see the light which has been poured through the vista of years till it has now illuminated the whole civilized world, flickering as a spark, and scarcely

affording a ray to guide the benighted footsteps of man. Now we feel its genial influence; now we walk in the glorious beams which lighten up life and death, and send its rays even into eternity. Shall we close our eyes to the truths it develops? No; coincident with the birth of Christ was the sun of righteousness vouchsafed to all. It shines for all, and its mild light will dispel all error, all doubt, till the time when the soul shall enter on one glorious day, which shall sparkle in the beams reflected from the Godhead forever and ever. On, then! The morn is breaking, and the glad sounds of joy are already wafted to our ears. Earth recognizes the refrain, nature responds in her own harmony, and the spirit feels how much there is of eternity in its own aspirations, even while progressing from earth toward heaven.

BACON.

Section Fifty-three.

Sunday, August 28th, 1853.

This evening, at Dr. Dexter's, it was written:

THERE is one circumstance in connection with Christ's mission on earth which distinctly shows what the object of his birth and sufferings was, and what the design of his labor among men was too, and that is, his intimate association with the masses whom he taught. To me, in the consideration of this whole subject, there is a most beautiful thought in this mingling of his own elevated nature with the grossness and ignorance and perverseness of the common people. Teaching them by trite and simple par-

ables, he descended to their comprehension, and came to the very door of the hearts which were not closed against him.

He ministered to the very principles of their nature, as he has done to the millions of our race who have come after him, in appealing to those very sentiments which have moved the human heart in all ages. Accustomed from his birth to all the deprivations and inconveniences which poverty generated, he associated with the masses on common ground, and thus, being one of them, he partially removed the dark vail which shrouded the future from their natural view. Disregarding all the claims of the rich and powerful, he essayed to develop in the people a love of themselves, a better appreciation of their own nature, and an anxious desire to assist one another. He cast his bread among the waters, and after the lapse of two thousand years he has found it in the tenfold increase of those aspirations which now so signally mark this age and time. How profoundly he understood the human heart! and in the picture which he drew of man's disposition he leaped over centuries of time, and identified the man of his own day and generation with man of the present age in all his attributes and properties.

But there is one feature of his mission which has not been apprehended, or even noticed, by all the divines of every sect who have pretended to explain his teachings since his death, and that is, he spoke, when on earth, to the very feelings and thoughts which could and would improve by the knowledge which he taught. He kindled a fire in the hearts of all men, slumbering though it has. While ages have passed and nations have been born, and have been buried, too, with the past; while laws have been established and temples have been built; while those laws have passed away, and those solid temples have crumbled into dust, still this fire has slumbered, but it has been the slumbering of the fires in the mighty volcano of time.

Now the heavens are darkened, dark volumes of smoke

issue from its vast crater, the lurid flame darts upward toward heaven, the clouds, the darkness, the storm, the whirlwind have passed away, the light illumines the whole earth, and in the efforts of man for the amelioration of his race, in his struggles for freedom of thought, of speech, of act, in the mighty achievements of his hands, in the recognition of his rights, and in the establishment of his liberty as a man, we have the effects of Christ's appeal to man two thousand years ago, distinct, marked, and visible at the present day. In the teachings of Christ we have the fundamental principles of every revolution which has succeeded in establishing the rights of man on earth. In this we have an illustration of the mission of the Saviour as a Reformer, and the effect of the progress of man.

And we have, too, the first point of earnest inquiry which his teachings elicited, What is man's destiny after death, and for what was he created? BACON.

I inquired if Christ was in his sphere?

It was answered:

Christ I never saw. The very faculties of his nature, which enabled him to progress so much while on earth, have so materially advanced his passage through the spheres that he has far outstripped the rest of his race. Christ, in the development of all the high, noble, and good characteristics of his nature, became perfect even as God is perfect, and he now dwells in those happy spheres where God is made manifest in all the mighty effects of his being. I doubt if he has descended to these spheres since his advent to this world. A nature so pure would seek its happiness where there was no grossness to pain it, and no material barriers to interrupt its progress. Thus, I believe Christ is with God, where I shall see him, and so shall you, when thousands and tens of thousands of years shall have passed away; when divested of sin, when pure as the morning star, your spirit shall wend its way through the eternal glories of the celestial spheres; when in the immortal splendor and

brilliance of your own purity you shall be able to stand in the presence of the spirits who are in themselves God ; when not a thought shall animate you, not a feeling influence you, but such as shall distinguish you as a spirit given off from the First Cause, holy, immaculate, and regenerated forever.

Then shall you, and I, and all of us, see Christ, for then shall we be like him, then shall we possess the courage to seek him, and then shall he say, Ye are my brothers and ye are my sisters.



APPENDIX

Appendix—A.

FACSIMILES OF WRITING.

Dear Mary I can't come tonight
I have too many patients on hand.

Ever yours
Geo. D. Dexters

We will then answer all your printed
questions & specially desire a certain price
for the explanation of all your queries—
Altho this will satisfy & thus—
Yours truly
Sunderby

No Mr the Reader this
nothing as long as you can
make it without giving
your heart, make your
arrangement to thought around
the little of them.

LOD BACON'S HANDWRITING.

Dear

By dear friends whose love
and until your minds take more
pleasure in the past than the other
part of the future - you will agree
that you have struck me longer
harder than that you are doing
well. I hope you are well.

Isaac T. Hopper

What the manner of life = the
one of the officers when it is the
good it has done, to years of this world's
pleasure . . . J. J.

Q where

I am not a worry for

NO - I don't know

what to say - I write

applied for - see to it

APPENDIX.

Appendix—B.

COMMUNICATION FROM GOVERNOR TALLMADGE.

NEW YORK, May 6th, 1858.

HON. JOHN W. EDMONDS:

My dear Sir—I cheerfully comply with your request for copies of communications received by me, purporting to come from DANIEL WEBSTER. They were received at Washington in January last, through a writing medium from Philadelphia.

The medium is a young man of fair natural capacity, of very limited education, and by trade a blacksmith. He writes with wonderful rapidity, and never mistakes or misspells a word, and never has occasion to correct a single word, although he may have written hour after hour without intermission. He writes with a pen in a bound blank-book; and the communications thus written are as perfect as the most skillful and expert copyist could have recorded them. His handwriting, as a medium, is as different from his ordinary handwriting as night from day.

You will perceive from the character of the communications that they are infinitely beyond the capacity of the medium, and even beyond the conceptions of Webster himself while in the body, and could only have emanated from his high order of intellect sublimated by a translation from this to another sphere.

It was well remarked by a gentleman of the highest order of intellect present, after the communications closed, that he had read all the old philosophers, from Plato down to Bacon, and had never seen any thing equal to these communications from Webster.

The sense in which he speaks of light is illustrated by the following view from a late work on this and cognate subjects:

"That God is the author of spiritual light unto mankind is exhibited from many passages of the Scriptures. Thus in Cor. iv. 6: 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give us the light of knowledge.' Again, in Luke ii. 2: 'A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.' Also in John: 'I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (viii. 12). The prophet Malachi designates the Lord the Sun of Righteousness—the orb in which righteousness is originally inherent, in which he dwells, and from which he shines into mankind. In the same manner it is also said by David, that the 'Lord God is a Sun.'"

It is remarkable that these communications arose out of conversations between myself and other gentlemen present, and were as unexpected to us as they were unpremeditated by the medium. We were conversing about light, its effects on the human system, in health and in sickness, when the medium's hand was moved to write, and then came the following communication :

You are all the true disciples of light ; follow on—do not fear—as you said, it is the great ingredient in the health of the body, and the perfect light of the spirit. It is the purity of God's rays shed far and wide, illuminating space, and filling it with aspirations that spirits drink and are happy. You must keep it far before you as the light of him who is the cause of your existence, and the enjoyment attached thereunto.

Then if he hath spread before you this enduring light, drink, and it will render your actions as transparent as itself—clear and pure it will become. As seen by others, your actions will be like the light that incites them, an honor unto you and the Father of the light.

WEBSTER.

While we were commenting on the communication, the medium's hand was again moved, and wrote as follows :

When we say light, we mean the pure essence of God that the sun reflects into your system. It is fraught with the life eternal ; is the secret of your happiness and the cause of your existence. Remove it, and the channel of communication between you and the Father is cut entirely away, and you must cease.

Chaos is darkness, and only that ; but darkness is not in the universe. There is light everywhere that life exists. The partial obscuration of light at night is for the resting of spirits that are so constituted that they tire the body, which by a reaction tires the spirit, and thus they both need rest. But there is no place dark, else God is not there ; and of this you can not conceive.

God is the Father of light, and in it are contained all the principles that govern the numberless bodies floating in space. Motion is part of its laws combined. Electricity is the handmaid that receives all its instructions from this servant of God, light.

Here a conversation ensued in relation to the communication just received, and then came the following :

The instructions I now receive, you can not comprehend. The source of light we can tell, but the cause we must say is God alone.

There we stop. He alone can create; and he alone knoweth the source from whence he bringeth the subtile essence spoken of. But be content with this, that it is as enduring as himself, and as pure.

Here farther comments were made, when the communication proceeded :

He is the Creator we love to study, and are still as his schoolboys learning our a, b, c's, and will always be. For we see continually new fields of this same light growing far and farther in space, and still we proceed in the still, silent search after the secret of our existence; and still have to say, that God alone is good, and we his happy though ignorant children. Still we are learning, and still shall learn; and as we ascend we see more and more of him. We come to earth and see our brother man. We pause before a sweet-scented flower, and listen to its quiet song of praise—scent of its sweetness, and return to search for the principles by which its delicate voice is tuned and its sweetness regulated—and all is still a happy mystery. Thus it is everywhere.

Here a conversation again ensued, in which the organization of the brain, among other things, was spoken of. Then the following communication was written out by the medium :

The brain of man is filled with organs, each differently acted upon with this same life-giving essence, light. And it produces the various motions of body and thought marking the individuality of man. All are different because of the different powers of comprehending light, and according as their organization is allowed to receive it. He who would shut his door against the light of day must pale and sicken. He who shuts out the light of conscience must keep his part of God as the diamond in the rough, that can not give life unto himself or his fellows. Dress up your own diamonds, and see the brilliant luster they give forth. It will greatly enhance your value as men, and give you the farther start in your happy future. Remember and heed well the light.

Here again a conversation ensued, and the following communication came, as called out by our remarks :

Yes, that is the right way. The boy that gets an idea that he knows more than any other boy, and the master too, will never learn fast.

Remember we spoke of light; and open windows and doors are certainly the best mediums through which it can be conveyed to

you. Let it be always thus. Ye are but boys in the school of knowledge ; but do not be discouraged. You have safely got through the alphabet of letters, but the alphabet of principles we have hard work to find ; and a great many we can not find aught of but the effect produced by their harmonious actions.

The visible works of nature might be called condensed principles, for this, in fact, they are. But *One* can comprehend the great connection between cause and effect, between Himself and the objects he has created. He is the cause, all else is effect. The poet was inspired when he said—

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul.”

Again there was further conversation, when came the following communication :

If you will keep open, we will give you ideas of life that you have not yet received. It is the active part of the light we still cling to. And you can as much see it as the light that incites it to action. Life is the active principle, and light the essence of that principle. We can extract principle essences as you extract wine from the grape. Put some principle under a press, such as life, motion, etc., by compressing them we get, or rather let out, the light ; and it flies away, and we have the hulls of life, motion, etc., left to pay us for our trouble. Never destroy the fruit in your extracting presses ; for the essence will surely escape, and then both fruit and essence are lost unto you.

Judge R. here made some remarks in his pointed and forcible style, and then followed the communication below :

You who have such correct ideas should not let forms trammel them and curb the spirit of their flow. Let them forth as you have just done, and angels will say the song of your spirit tells of flowers more bright than those comprising the life of the flowers of which we spoke. It singeth its true song. Now do so as far as thou canst comprehend the truth thereof, and behold the future shall open visions of whose pure light thou canst not conceive. Man is studying as thou sayest, and has simplified some things. But the difficult though pleasant part yet remains. Seek, investigate, and thy ideas of God shall swell as the river swollen with many rains, and the banks shall be overflowed, and thy thirsty kind drink of the

pure waters freely, and bless not only thee, but the former of the principle producing the rains that supplied thee. Remember this. This is handed down from a very high source. Thou art worthy, go on, we love thee.

After commenting on the beauty and philosophy of Webster's communication, Judge R. remarked :

It is true that principles must have an essence originating principles and the cause of them; and let the communications come from what source they may, they come consistent with true philosophy.

The medium wrote in answer :

Wherever is true philosophy, there is an essence of principles and part of God's purity. Then be very careful not to reject what you have admitted so much of.

Judge R. then said :

My strongest desire to know that spirits exist is to demonstrate that after death the spirit retains a consciousness of its own identity. Because if it returns, as a bare essence, to the source from whence it came, it is nothing more than the Braminical doctrine of annihilation.

The medium wrote in answer :

Your own repugnance to such a belief is the proof of its falsity.

Judge R. then said :

Nothing on earth is so repugnant to me as the idea of the spirit not existing after death.

The medium then wrote :

The inner light of your existence makes the repugnance. It wars with its opponent, darkness.

Again a further conversation was had in regard to the future existence of the spirit, and its identity after death.

The medium then wrote the following :

You want proof of the future existence of spirit, and the identity of each spirit remaining the same to all eternity. Now, sever a flower from its parent stem and try to destroy it. Thou wilt find the leaves wither and decay. Thou canst pulverize them, but the dust remains as the dead body of the lifeless nature. Select the sweetness from the atoms composing the flower and try to destroy it; it will escape thee and sweeten the air, doing its little mite toward rendering all pure on the face of the earth. Then draw thy own conclusions. If thou canst not destroy the identity of the little flower, how can thy own identity be destroyed, when it is composed and the recipient of

more high and holy powers than are used in the construction of aught else below thee? Then fear not. God is not such a poor workman that aught of his construction ought or can be changed. Remember this; all he doeth is *done*, and naught can undo it.

Judge R. then went on commenting in his highest and most eloquent strain, when the following communication was received:

A man with a mighty mind! his spirit seeks the highest spheres known, and there revels in the glory of the eternal light of God; returning, his mind burns as a volcano seeking the outer air, and when the bursting point is reached the lava runs down the side of the green mountain and all is scorched and blackened. Then again comes the relapse. This is followed by another glorious visit to the spirit-home, and then the circle is entered again and the fire lighted, and again all is dark. Oh! visit those holy places oftener; they do thee good; and all else that is worthy of being good and useful is given thee in these glimpses of the purity of heaven bestowed upon thy hungry spirit. Do not burn the body of thy spirit-home; keep thy brain cool. Remember thou art the image of God's noblest production, a combination of things in nature. Go on thy way rejoicing; all is well! We love thee, and will, if thou dost open thy door, pour in the continual flood of living light. All is well with thee.

Again we entered into conversation about the mind, spirit, and passions, when we received the following communication:

The mind is debarred from entering eternity, from the fact that the mind is not constituted of principles that are a part of eternity. The inhabitant of the mind is the essence of the mind, and as such endureth forever.

By the compressing of all these passions you get the harmonious spark called spirit, and leave behind all the hulls called passions.

The animal passions are compressed to give you passions above them, making your passions as the compressed essence of theirs.

Light is the source of life, motion, chemical affinity, astronomical calculations, and all else but God.

Existence is proof of harmony. When you use that word *all* is said. There is one harmony, one purely harmonious God. All else diverge and converge to this point.

Something was said about the harmonious action of mind, and the medium immediately wrote:

For this reason your minds are governed by harmonious principles.

I then said to Calhoun, My son tells me you teach him many important things. Will you give me some idea of what they are?

It was immediately answered :

The knowledge of light as our brother spirit has been giving it to you.

I regret extremely that I did not preserve the conversation and remarks which called forth the different portions of this communication. They would have served to give still more point to the communication itself. But I could not recall them. As it is, I consider the whole communication as exhibiting the highest order of intellect, and that intellect sublimated by the purity of the sphere in which it exists. The style and language will be recognized as perfectly Websterian, from the pure Saxon English which runs throughout the whole of it.

Very truly yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

I add from my records the following communications, some of which were received in the Governor's presence, the account of which I kept.

J. W. E.

RECEIVED THROUGH MRS. S., AUGUST 10, 1852, PURPORTING TO
BE FROM HENRY CLAY.

It is with feelings of thankfulness that I have again found an opportunity of speaking through a medium. It seems to be the wish which is ever uppermost in my mind to come back to earth, and mingle again in the scenes in which I took so active a part, but not with the same desire that I then had to participate in the hopes or fears which sway the minds of those who can not see beyond the present sphere of existence.

But it is my desire to make myself known, if possible, to those with whom I have walked the down-hill path of life. And it is my aim when I shall succeed in so doing, to open their minds to the truth of this incalculable and momentous manifestation, to them unknown.

I foresee, in so doing, the light of wisdom to rule and govern a nation that is striving to rise into liberty on the wings of an eagle, and how absolutely necessary and all important is it that the minds of the rulers of the land should be filled with the wisdom which shall enable them to rule with a justice which shall diffuse its in-

fluence with the knowledge of truth. And the truth, when it shall reach the minds of the people, with the power which only truth can approach, will open their minds to the enjoyment of this glorious knowledge, which will lead to the happiness of the people, to the nation's lasting good.

When this young eaglet, whose aspiring wings are spread to all nations and climes, shall become stronger in her strength, and more powerful in her power—and, thank God! this power shall yet be felt in the uttermost parts of the earth—the cry shall be to the people, Strengthen ye my loved ones with the strength of the truth which is strengthening ye.

Oh, how lovely the light! how palely beautiful the beams which are darting hither and thither around. And it falls there, and it falls here, and it takes root, and the root takes strength and is beginning to flourish. But ah! the young saplings are yet tender. The winds of ridicule and calumny blow roughly over their head. It may break. It may rudely handle them in their tender youth. But oh! it will not blast them. The young trees shall lift their heads and become as oaks, which, amid the tempests, stand unmoved.

And I would say to the weak ones, oh! be strong in your faith and trust in God; for this glorious work is advancing slowly, but surely and steadily. And as an army whose ranks are feeble at first, it shall increase in strength and beauty, and might and majesty, until it shall overpower the hearts of the people, not with the force of power, but with the power of love.

Already in my short journey I can perceive how great the happiness and welfare of the nation is to be promoted by a knowledge of the truth, when they shall reap the benefit of the communion of spirits from the highest to the lowest in the land.

Oh! how great, how earnest is the desire of spirits to make their presence known! And through that influence the hearts of men shall grow weak in their desire to commit crime, and to wrong their fellow-man. Through that influence the weak and oppressed shall be raised from the dust, and placed on the level plain of Humanity; which the power of God willed all human beings to enjoy, but which the perverted will of man, whose conscience has become deaf to the voice of nature's God, has down-trodden and oppressed when circumstances have given him authority over them.

But the voice of freedom from the thralldom of mind and body shall ere long be heard over the land, and minds shall rise strong in the knowledge which God has given them, and teach to other minds how dark the gloom which sectarianism, and superstition, and unbelief, and skepticism have cast around them. And I say their fetters shall be broken as the light shall spread onward.

As I contemplate this work, which is gradually becoming unfolded, I thank God in my inmost heart that I have been permitted to soar above this land of shadows, and darkness, and dimness, and whose honors and glories flee away as shadows from our grasp, and leave us toiling for we know not what.

I now stand on the mount of Hope, whose strength upholdeth me, and whose light becomes stronger and brighter, nor vanisheth as the objects are nearer. But more lovely becomes this lovely light the nearer I approach it, through the goodness of God and the aid of spirits made perfect, who dwell in the presence of his smile, and who do their Father's will where life is unceasing, joy is never ending, and eternity is eternal.

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH INTERVIEW.

NEW YORK, *September 12th, 1852.*

The Circle of Hope met this evening. Mr. N. P. Tallmadge, of Wisconsin, was present by invitation.

Mr. Ambler was requested to open the meeting with prayer. He was immediately thrown into the trance state, and in that condition gave utterance to one at once touching and sublime.

Mrs. S. soon became affected, and spoke as from JOHN C. CALHOUN.

This is a novel situation for me, one which I can scarcely yet realize myself. It is, nevertheless, a mighty and overwhelming reality to me as well as to you, my friends, who can feel it to be such. I have gladly availed myself of this privilege this evening in your midst, because I can see here those with whom I had relations while in the form.

My object in coming is to me a very great one, and, God knows, I wish it was so to the world at large. I wish, I desire, I pray most fervently that we might feel how great the responsibility that is resting on each one who has heard the revelations of life and truth, to spread the echo, to spread the circle of sound, of thought, of energy, of ambition, to excel in the labors of the field, in which they are

placed by being partakers of this high and holy privilege—privilege unfathomable, untold, unfelt, and unexpressed, ever changing, ever beautifying, and becoming more lovely, more light, more holy, more serene in its outward paths.

My experience as a spirit is very limited in comparison with some with whom you have conversed, and I deeply feel it to be so to-night.

I deeply feel the barrenness of my soul, the lack of wisdom, the dread of ridicule, the loss of friends, the thought of enemies which debarred me from participating, from being experienced, from a want of knowledge of this holy privilege.

Why, my friends, while in the form it was not a new thing to me. Oh, no! it was a great reality, which my soul felt to be true, but dared not own. Have I not felt the presence of my friends around me in my seasons of despondency and doubt? I believed it, but dared not say it.

That "dared"—shall I tell you what it did to me? It shut out from my soul a revelation that might have gladdened it, and compels me now to unbeam, when the covering of clay was thrown off.

Ask him, and him, and him, if he has not felt the presence of loved friends departed? a mother, a child, a wife was near? Yes, and the inmost heart, welling up from the depths of the inmost tenderness, will answer.

It is the connecting link between the spirits of your sphere and ours; the cord that draws the spirit back to earth and elevates the thought back to heaven.

This may to many seem a small, worthless, and even absurd subject. The great and mighty of the earth despise small things, yet it is the small things, the trifles, which draw out the tenderest emotions of the heart. They swell and overflow. Have not the high and mighty those well-springs in their hearts? Yes; every heart will gush up, and through their afflictions must the mighty ones be reached.

Thank God! it has been told me in my home, though you may not see it, that the time will arrive when earth's children will all be children of our Father, who is the God whom all nations adore in some form. Some adore him as the sun, as images, as nature. The simple hearts, and those in high places, the poor and the humble in heart, adore him—the afflicted and the downcast, and he comforts them.

This intercourse is calculated to bring heaven and earth more closely together, and to make man feel his responsibility as man, to lift him up from his degradation, and when you see this fully, you will not say the spirits' labor has been in vain. When the unfolding light of spiritual communication shall reach the heart of the sons and daughters of earth, it will come with sweet humility, open their eyes, and show them wherein they err. It will set them to thinking; and every heart thus set to thinking will feel "Thou art the man."

No one will be overlooked in the crowd. The great spirits will take cognizance of all, the high and the low.

Some say, I'll believe when others do. If so, you lose much precious time by tarrying. Sometimes the laggart is caught in darkness ere he is aware.

Then, turning to Mr. Tallmadge, he said :

My object in coming to-night is principally to you, my friend, as I wish to whisper a word in your ear that you may be strengthened in your faith, you may be a medium to convey important truths to others, as I am now to convey my knowledge to you. This is with me yet very limited; but I do not live as one without hope. Far from it. The circumstances now surrounding me are so different from those surrounding me while on earth, that my vision is more enlarged. It is not bounded by so small a compass as this city, this country, or this world, even, in my little sphere. But the knowledge that is now opening to my view! I can not conceive of its magnitude. The wisdom of God, the witness of his created worlds of power, of light, which is ever opening to my view! if it come any faster it would overwhelm me; as my sphere of thought, of experience, as I said before, is very limited. Why, I can not give even the faintest conception, nor will I try, of the magnificent, ever-varying, and all-absorbing visions and realms which are continually breaking upon my enraptured eye.

How very dim life on earth seems to me now! I look upon it as a troubled dream, wherein were indeed some bright spots, some kind feelings shed around my path to make it brighter. I was but the germ placed in a casket of clay, whose inner unfoldings, whose heaven-sent aspirations, should have begun to develop themselves sooner while placed there.

Of every man shall be required a talent. Let each ask, Have I

one, and will the Lord require that talent of me? Most assuredly, my friends. Do not hide it in the ground, but let it shine forth to warn your fellow-men. It was given to use—one may help another, and all mingle and combine together, and make up the great sun which giveth life on earth.

Every created one has some germ of beauty to be expanded. All are not unfolded, because the present state of society forbids it. What beautiful spirits are hid below the superstition, ignorance, error, and poverty that surround you!

When will man feel that his fellow-man requires a talent at his hand? As ye do it to these little ones so ye do it unto me.

You may think that all are not performing a work. All can not, through the force of circumstances. The work which enables the rich man to roll in luxury causes the sweat to pour from the poor man's brow. Is this right? Is your society organized aright? Were labor so equalized that all might bear a part, each in his respective capacity, all might share in the benefits, and yet all be in their proper places, not to create confusion, or a vast revolution, or plan of socialism, but so dividing and diffusing that the wants of all should supply the wants of all; the works of all supply the works of all; mind as well as labor. By so doing there would be no necessity for the poor beggar to wander through your streets, for the little stray waifs, the homeless ones, to be cast on the broad sands of iniquity.

How the spirits grieve at the lowness of those who are made to grovel in the dust, by the selfishness and rapacity of their fellows in humanity! The humblest creature, however deformed or warped, is capable of being cultivated in its own sphere, and be made useful.

Friends! won't you work to bring this about? Won't you speak to those in high places? It will begin as a drop and flow out and become a stream, and grow broader in the glad sunlight.

The seed is not always sown on fallow ground. In some places it will yield fifty-fold; and if it yield only one, will it not satisfy you that you are improving your time?

Do you not perceive, as you use your talent, it will increase? That it confers more strength on the owner, as well as extends to others the benefits which you have so bountifully received?

They told me this was called Circle No. 1.

Your privileges have been No. 1 indeed, and your responsibility

is the same. Do you not see how great your talent, and how much will be required of you ?

You are entering on an era of great events, great developments, great revealments, great revelations.

Will all, then, endeavor to be satisfied with the part that is given him ? All have a part to perform. Just as soon as you are prepared for it, just as soon as you can bear it, just so soon will that part be required of you to your utmost satisfaction.

My friends, continue in your faith, and hope, and work, and I bid ye God speed. More I can not do. You are in better hands than me.

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD INTERVIEW.

Monday, Oct. 27th, 1852.

Last evening as I was writing in my library alone, Mr. and Mrs. S— were shown in. They had been impelled by the spirits to come over and see me ; and though they knew that I had the day before left town with the intention of being absent from town for several days, yet they were told by the spirits that I was home, and so they came and found me.

A few minutes after they came in Mr. Hutchinson called, and thus we four without any preconcert formed a circle, at which we had the following communication from DANIEL WEBSTER, who died on Sunday, the 24th inst.

He was some time in getting control of the medium, and in the mean time Mr. Sweet and Mr. Hutchinson made inquiries, from which they ascertained who it was, but I was silent

They got nothing more than an announcement of who he was, until they solicited me to ask some questions ; and I inquired whether his coming to commune with us so soon was the result of his strong attachment to earthly things, or was in the performance of a duty, a mission with which he was charged ?

After a while, he said :

My friends, it affords me unspeakable pleasure to be so soon and so candidly received as a visitor from the country which I find is no longer an unknown one to many of you.

At this moment, friends, I realize my utter unworthiness of this blessing, this opportunity ; nor should I so soon have enjoyed it, were it not for the kindness of old friends whom I have met with, and who have taken me by the hand as a brother, and assisted me. Not only in one sense unworthy, but in a thousand other respects do I feel how undeserving I am of being permitted to make my presence known to those who know I had no sympathy for such dreamings or imaginings, as I conceived them to be while here.

Heaven knows I am as thankful and as humble as any of God's creatures. I now truly see and feel my position in respect to my eternal welfare. Yes; God gave me a massive intellect, the world said, but that intellect now appears to have been very narrow in its development in the wisdom which it now requires to be made acquainted with, in order that the qualities of mind which were so richly bestowed upon me while here on earth, may now become clear and unclouded in the conclusions of spirituality, without which, were I Solomon himself, I could not attain to more than the most commonplace mind on earth.

It is not the material kind of wisdom which I now need to aid me in my new stage of development. I find I am what I believe you call an undeveloped individual in my new stage of existence. But, thank God, I see ample fields opening for my research, which I might have entered long ago had I been so minded.

It was a great, though not a grand mistake of mine not to seek the truth before, regarding this matter.

In my day I sought out many truths, and many new truths to many minds; but now I see that the most important truth was altogether overlooked. My soul felt with an overwhelming force the mighty sense, the infinite power of the Almighty in all his works. The grand and glorious hand of nature imparted her divine revelation; but, friends, I never sought the voice which might touch my heart and receive an answer in the flesh.

It is this I mourn for now. How clearly do I now perceive my short-comings! But, thank God, my life has not been spent entirely in vain for my country or mankind. I speak not thus with a feeling of triumph, or boastingly, but with a feeling of regret that I had not more wisely directed my talents, and had not enabled myself to let the glorious gifts of God in me shine forth in a purer, broader, and brighter light.

As I look back on my past career, I see much to regret and much to rejoice for. I see, at the present period in my country's history, peace and plenty, and the people as happy as they possibly could be, under the present state of affairs. But since I have thrown off my mortal body, my spirit has taken a bird's-eye view of the universe. Oh, God! how dark it seems even here! [Here were evident signs of deep emotion.]

It appears as though the minds which directed the people were

undirected themselves in so many respects, where, had they done differently, a different state of things would now exist. But I have no right to complain. I did not see it while here to so great an extent as I now see it.

Oh, I see how very great the darkness of the leaders has been in respect to the wants of the people, and my own leanness in this respect stands before me as a withered tree.

You wish to know my object in coming here to-night. It is easily told. You all know my former character. You can not possibly believe I can so soon become spiritual-minded. Clouds of materialism, which darkened the finer elements of my mind, still cast their shadows around me; but I wish you to understand that I realize what I might have been, what I am, and what I am to be. My life on earth was misspent, and my mission is to make the atonement for it. To be the Daniel Webster on earth and the Daniel Webster in heaven. You understand me?

I confessed that I did not.

He said:

My friend, my respected friend, you do not confess that you think I can not be happy?

I am in a state to profit much and deeply by the experience of many who have been here before me, and you will confess that I am the man that can do so.

It will be my earnest wish to benefit my fellow-beings on earth. My sympathy is with them. I participate in their hopes and fears, and you will not therefore be surprised at my desire again to return to earth.

Here he paused, and it was intimated to us to ask him questions. We stated the great want we felt of practical instructions, whereby the minds of people could be reached easier than by general abstractions, and we wished he would give us a practical view of the change he had undergone.

He answered:

I was first impressed with the vastness of the change I had undergone. The next was the boundless space that lay before me to explore; and as my eye traversed the immensity which surrounded me, I felt as but a speck in that immensity.

The next was my meeting with my friends—the next the view of myself, and the character of the sphere where I mingled. Having

become sufficiently enlightened on those subjects, and having my past life brought forth in bold relief before me, the question naturally arose, I will atone for all the wrongs I may have committed, consciously or unconsciously, as far as shall lie within myself.

That seems to be the first duty which is required of me in my new home; to see myself in true colors, that the false colors may be stripped from around my existence, and the true shine forth with greater and native brilliancy.

There was something in the manner in which this was delivered, that struck those of us who had heard him speak, as remarkably characteristic of him, and we gave utterance to the thought.

He said :

How happy I am. You do more than I would have done. You all believe it.

Then, in answer to a question how far his prayer for forgiveness when dying had aided him afterward, he said :

My friend, in my short existence I find that sin must forgive itself by expiating itself in the mind. How naturally the former life, former faults, and former follies all rise up before me and reproach me, and almost take the form of an avenging angel. If there is a hell, it is when such thoughts reign supreme; and if there is a heaven, it is the recollection of having performed the duty required of us by the Great First Cause, who gave us our talents to be used for the benefit of our fellow-men, and made us the machines to direct the springs placed within our bodies.

That is to be my greatness again. My mission will consist in reaching men in many different ways. Not in one, or two, or twenty ways will I perform the work which I am beginning to learn merely the alphabet of. Yet, my friend, when I shall be permitted to come again, I can more clearly explain to you my position and my employments than I can at present. My experience is but short in my newly-found home. But I hope, fervently, hopefully, deeply, trustingly, to be useful in every sense of the word, useful to my fellow-men and to myself.

I see many means of intercommunication which are shortly to be opened, which, however, I could not explain to you so that you would understand, and which I hardly understand myself. It would be the blind leading the blind.

The interview continued a good while longer. It was desultory. He spoke so rapidly I did not make the necessary memorandum.

I mention a few incidents.

Among other things, in answer to one of our questions, he said :

That at his departure he was unconscious for about fifteen minutes, during which time his spirit was leaving its former tenement, and mingling itself with its new atmosphere. He supposed that all experience that, in a greater or less degree, unless it might be those who were more spiritually developed, he believed we called it, than he was.

He said, also, that he was introduced to us, and to this mode of communication by Mr. Clay, that he had been round with him for two days, looking into and learning the process of intercourse. That this was the first of his communicating.

He said it was not worth while to communicate this to his friends and family, for they would receive it as he had done, as an idle dream.

I spoke to him of the difficulty of reaching men's minds with this new philosophy.

He thought there was little or no difficulty about it.

How happened it then, I inquired, that while this thing has been going on around you for four years or more, it never reached you? ✓

His reply was, that it now seemed all so natural and simple, that it seemed to him not difficult to make people understand it. Yet the whole thing was so new to him that he could not yet judge accurately. "Have patience with me, friends, till I am able fully to realize my present position, and I will speak further with you on this subject."

He said he discovered there were enthusiastic spirits who had communed, who promised more than they could perform, yet who really thought they could perform as they promised, and these difficulties with the mediums gave rise to contradictions and inconsistencies.

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH INTERVIEW.

Oct. 30th 1852.

Communication given by DANIEL WEBSTER to Mr. and Mrs. S. this evening.

In answer to a question about his mission, he said :

I see much good to be accomplished when I shall have sufficiently progressed in the sphere in which I am placed, to understand the laws which are requisite for the high and delightful mission of contributing the use of the talents with which I was blessed in enjoying the use of, and was permitted to see the character of the fruits

which they bore while performing the duties of life's requirements while here. And I now recognize, in a full and fair vision spread out before my eyes, how greatly these talents may be developed in a spiritual point of view, which will still continue to make me useful to mankind.

And, thank Heaven, no qualms of conscience, prejudice, or principle shall act there as a barrier to obstruct the full flow of my soul's aspirations after goodness and wisdom, to surround me with the ennobling and beautifying principles which have lain deeply imbedded within my soul.

In glancing over my past existence, I perceived many feelings, which lay buried within my being, were concealed from my view by the outward causes which were acting upon, and moulded my mind, and left their impress graven upon my public career in letters which time will not soon efface.

I now find that the predominant feelings which were once called into action from my station in life, had the effect of deadening what would otherwise have lighted and radiated my mind to greater expansion than I could possibly have conceived while there, and thrown a genial influence of inward light upon my outward man, which would have made life seem as only the stage whereon to enact the duties assigned us by the infinite wisdom of our Maker. And then, having made our peace with God, through having made peace with our fellow-men, in benefiting them by the instructions which have been given us in their behalf, we should put on immortality as a garment of light, and be welcomed with a happy assurance, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Father."

I realize now how great that joy must be to a heart whose associations have ever been pure and unselfish, whose material structure has not so operated on and controlled their inward light, but that they have been able to realize the actual presence of the spirit of revelation within their inmost souls. And when called upon to change their place of habitation, have set out as upon a road whose banks were lined with living flowers, and whose streams were immortal in the light and transparency of their flow, and whose thoughts had realized (in more than dreams) the unfading and unfailing sources of happiness ever springing forth and enrapturing the eye, and bathing the soul in the mellowed beauty of heavenly com-

munion. Dreamy now seems the past compared with the fair realities of the present which have been presented to even me—me, who entered as a traveler that seeks an unknown country and requires a map to guide him through the many different and dimly conceived localities which he may have heard of, as being some time to be explored, and leaning upon an all-ruling Power, but not remembering that the eternal life has more mysteries to be sought and found than the short, the transient one which we have known here the longest, but short when compared with the smallest part of that which we have in view.

Had I a thousand tongues to tell the multitude of wonders, they should all be of the great and reforming in all its aspects, the good of my country, the good of mankind at large, through the exceedingly beautiful and natural laws which are bringing the world of reality, and that which has been hitherto one of shadows together.

My words fail to describe my feelings, when I attempt to portray the delight which I feel thrill through my soul with a warm glow of happiness in contemplating the high destiny of the human race. I do not speak of that which is to come in centuries. I do not wish to carry my ideas out of your reach; but I mean within a few short years which I can speak of, as knowing the meaning of what I say, having so lately been guided by the same measure of time myself.

* * * * *

I feel that the high and beautiful wisdom of the Almighty God is indeed manifesting itself in a manner miraculous to spirits and astounding to mortals. And were I willing at this period of time to become a visionary rather than the practical man which I ever delighted to be, I could paint such pictures as would open the bowers of Eden, green and beautiful to your view, fanned by the wings of angels, soothed by the breath of love and hope—bright hope—harmonized by the all-pervading power of wisdom, which not only has worked, but is continually working wonders in the flesh and in the spirit. It would be a picture of peace and happiness, brought into operation by the coöperation of men and spirits, which, through their combined efforts, will yet concentrate the forces of their powers, that their strength shall be felt through every nerve and fiber of the human mind.

To me, who can now view these things independent of mortal eyes, the prospect is indeed cheering. Pray Heaven that the eye of

your understanding may be opened to realize here what I never appreciated in its stupendous might and majesty until I arrived there.

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH INTERVIEW.

November 28d, 1852.

This evening the Circle of Hope met. General E. F. Bullard, of Waterford, and Miss Bishop were present as visitors. The communications were through Mrs. S. as the medium, and were as follows :

Friends, I was called DANIEL WEBSTER while an inhabitant of your sphere. By that name you will now recognize me as the spirit addressing you.

I must confess it is with feelings of delicacy that I approach your circle to take a part of your valuable time. But my opportunities of conversing with friends in this sphere, since my departure as an embodied form have been few, and it is not that I expect to be able to impart much instruction to you as regards the higher and more beautiful plane of thought on which your minds are arriving, as it is to say how I am grateful and humiliated to find how true is the truth of this returning to earth, and how foolish is the blindness which makes men turn away their eyes and shut their hearts to the knowledge which speaks to the heart in a trumpet tone, or reaches them through the still small voice of conscience.

My experience has been but of short duration, yet long enough to see and to feel how much of the true knowledge, which might govern and direct the human mind, for its temporal as well as spiritual welfare, I was utterly ignorant of. I now see how utterly incapable men are with their present knowledge and past experience of advancing the welfare of the human race in the progression eternal which might be, if better acquainted with the human and divine laws apparent around you.

The laws which men make are so different from nature's. I have been looking into the narrow platform of thoughts and fears which men are constantly erecting and constantly overthrowing, for the simple reason that the platform is not wide enough, and thus one scale outweighs the other.

As I look abroad over the earth, over my own loved country, I see so many small circles—so many small platforms, and that they need a larger one to revolve around.

I am astonished as I look around to see how very contracted my ideas were, yet I fondly imagined I took a flight like the eagle in her soarings to view the extended map of mind.

Friends, will you doubt me when I tell you I see a great and gradual change which will soon cover the face of the earth? I see the fires blazing up and breaking forth in different directions, and I see many and mighty spirits lighting these fires and feeding them—many great and mighty men who have passed away from the earth, coming in strength to help the work of the redemption of man.

I feel I have a great part to take in this mighty revolution. It has begun, and is spreading and overwhelming, as the billows roll over the great face of the waters when lashed to fury by some unseen power.

Oh that I had begun my seeking sooner; that I had wisely improved the talent given me, and let it shine forth, for then it would have lightened my path upward to the mansions above.

Mighty thoughts rush through my brain as I look abroad—too great for utterance now. I see that this work is to be a practical one. It is not to be performed by the writers, or philosophers, the wise men or the poets of the day, but all, from the greatest to the lowest, are to assist and be instruments of utility, not as servants, but as heirs, as brothers, who will all alike enjoy the fruits of their labor. The young, the old, the middle-aged, all are to assist.

In looking back upon many of my friends who were familiar with me here, I see that before six months, or a year at farthest, shall elapse, many of them will have embraced and will proclaim this great truth, and I see some of them are to join me and assist me in more ways than one. I see many among my friends whose minds are awakened to the subject, but whose fears deter them from investigating, and I see many of the spirit-friends who are keeping their feelings alive.

You think I ought to describe my spirit-home, and truly I would do so if it were in my power. Think of a life spent here mid the toil and bustle and busy thoughts of a nation, where the mind reached heaven but in glimpses, and the soul did not drink deeply of the inspiration around it. Imagine such a one taken to that country, and placed amid all that was new, and startling, and glorious! It is a child in its first efforts to learn its first lesson. Picture my friends around me, telling me all that is new, and good, and beautiful, and how much I must learn, and forget, and work. Yes,

work is no new word in the spirit-world. Every immortal soul is ever working, ever seeking for new light and new knowledge, and the more knowledge they obtained before leaving your sphere, the less they have to seek for in their initiation into the world of wonders.

You speak of your statesmen's having left you, of your having none to fill their places. Do not think so. Greater than they will fill their places. Mightier than they shall speak to the nation, in language bringing flowers of truth for man to live by and to die by. To die; the word will be banished from earth. It is but an exchange, a putting off the worn-out frame, and entering the new and beautiful spirit-covering which is prepared for us as we emerge into the world—not of shadows, but of bright realities.

Your earth is but a speck when compared with the splendors and high glories which I see before my view, but which I have not reached, but see in the distance, and labor to reach. The vail is removed. The bright and beautiful country is in my view. As a fair landscape it appears before me, and I as the wanderer, when picturing the joys of his far-off home, I am looking at it. This urges me on where I may behold the sun of righteousness in all its unclouded splendor.

My ideas are imperfectly given, owing to the difficulties of communicating, and my want of knowledge of its laws. I have been anxious to speak here before, but have not always been able to impress my name. But I am improving, and hope soon to be able to impart some things of utility, something practically to benefit those who take an interest in this good work. How I regret I did not begin sooner! My feelings overcome me when I look on what I might have been. My language may not have appeared like that of Daniel Webster; but I was anxious to begin, though I began as a child, for I know you will make good use of it, and it will be of much use to my surviving friends.

After a pause, he said:

My old friend Mr. Clay desires to speak.

And Mr. CLAY said:

Friends, it is some time since I have had the pleasure to make myself known to you, though I have very often met with spirits who mingle around your circle.

I have deeply rejoiced this evening at the efforts of my friend to give forth his ideas to you. He has succeeded in some degree; if imperfectly, you must make allowance, for there are circumstances which we can not always control. I am happy, most happy this evening to come in company with my old friend, and it is nothing more nor less than a high degree of wisdom that has called that spirit from the earth, and many others, for they shall, from their high abodes, become perfected, and give it back to earth. The minds which sway mankind are being moved, and those in the spirit-land must take their places. Darkness shall no longer cover the face of the earth.

The men who conduct the affairs of the nation are about to become enlightened in a manner which shall compel them to throw aside old forms and emerge into the channel which this new revelation is opening to all. And it shall be felt in the public institutions, and in the schools, practically felt and practically acted on. It will give you new laws, new ideas to carry out, and show the rottenness, the uselessness of your falling laws, and make the path beautiful and plain and clear, so that even a child may tread it.

Some say it will not reach all. That is a mistake. It will first reach the intelligent mind, because it is what the intelligent mind requires. The mind which has had chains and land-marks has become weary of them, and this light shall shine on their souls and fill them with joy.

This many have been expecting, but they little thought they were to receive it in so simple a way as the rappings. They who would find out great truths must first find out its simplicity.

Ere long you shall hear strange tales from across the seas. The spirits are laboring with untiring zeal to assist man in his mighty labors. You simply show him the high privilege he may aspire to, the knowledge he may grasp, and then your duty is done. Place the means within his reach and pass on to another.

Slow but steadily it is spreading, and gently, and in musical tones it comes; yet to some it comes as an avenging voice of past misdeeds; to some it comes lifting them up from sorrow; to some who cease to look for happiness on earth, it opens new fountains of light, and lights up the darkness within. Some it shall haunt as a specter, and cause them to shrink from past misdeeds and present crimes. As though a thunderbolt fell at their feet, they shall stand

still and wonder. To some it has come as a beacon-light seen in the distance, but never reached—sought in vain; but now the windows open and the light enters.

Thus will it affect different minds; but all will be reached. Some may scoff, and sneer, and cry humbug. Yet there is a feeling awakened within their hearts. They feel that it is other than that. It takes no form save that of universal light, and love, and progression. It absorbs no one spot, but as a mist would envelop the world.

All I can say this evening is, Go on in your quiet and beautiful and soul-cheering work, and God and spirits will assist you. And what more assistance can you ask for?

At the request of Governor Tallmadge the following letters are added to his appendix.

The first was to the "National Intelligencer," at Washington.

COLLAMORE HOUSE, NEW YORK, April 30, 1853.

MESSRS. GALES & SEATON:

A friend has just called my attention to an article in the *National Intelligencer* of the 25th instant, headed "Impostures and Delusions." The article is not under the editorial head; still it is not marked as a communication, and was considered by the gentlemen who handed it to me, and would be considered by the generality of your readers, as editorial. Be this, however, as it may, the article is published by you without any dissent from its views, and may therefore be taken by the uninformed as meeting your approbation.

The writer alludes to the "Salem hangings," and says "that there may yet arise, at future periods, similar or analogous disorders of the popular mind, invading and corrupting the whole body politic, which it may in like manner become necessary to suppress by the strong hand of the law. Indeed, we might point, as already coming within this category, the Rochester knockings, with their kindred train of rascalities and abominations."

A little farther on the writer adds: "In like manner it is the general opinion of well-informed and deep-thinking persons, that it is already high time to call in legislative aid, if the execution of no

existing statutes can reach the present evil, for this perilous imposture, or yet more perilous contagion of morbid minds."

This is a sweeping denunciation of all who have investigated these "Spiritual Manifestations," and who have expressed a belief in their truth. And the spirit which pervades the whole article would not only recall the "Salem hangings," but would also invoke the "fires of Smithfield." I have no hesitation in saying I am one "coming within this category." And, let me assure you, there are throughout this widely-extended country some of the brightest and most exalted intellects who have, from a thorough investigation of this matter, come to the same conclusion. Yet such men are to be thus denounced by a writer who is so far behind the intelligence of the age, that he includes in his denunciations mesmerism and clairvoyance, which are considered by intelligent and scientific men as well established as electricity and magnetism. If this were all, he would deserve simply to be laughed at. But, in regard to Spiritualism, he probably never condescended to examine the subject, and yet assumes that he knows more about it by mere instinct, than others of equal talent, to say the least, do by the most patient research and philosophical investigation.

This article, I am persuaded, has been published by you without full examination or due reflection. It runs counter to all the principles of "law and order" which have been so uniformly enforced in the *National Intelligencer*. And I regret extremely that such disorganizing, such abominable, such flagitious sentiments should, even indirectly, have the influence of your names. I feel myself as being included in these denunciations; for, although I do not obtrude my opinions or my facts on any one, still I have communicated freely with those who have voluntarily sought information on this subject. During the last winter, at Washington, I conferred fully, and on their own solicitation, with some of the most distinguished men in the nation. I gave to them my own opinions, and the exalted communications and facts on which those opinions were founded.

Retired from public life, I have desired in this, as in all other matters, to avoid public observation. At the same time, you have been acquainted with me well enough and long enough to know that, when I have deliberately formed an opinion on any subject, I have that rare quality, called moral courage, which enables me to avow it either in private or in public.

So far as the public are concerned, I have as yet endeavored to maintain a profound silence. But considering myself as one of those so vindictively denounced in the article alluded to, further silence on my part would argue pusillanimity, and cease to be a virtue. I have not language to express my astonishment at the suggestions and doctrines there put forth—doctrines which subvert the very principles of civil and religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution under which we live. Who could have conceived that, at this advanced period of the nineteenth century, while we are surrounded by the multiplied evidences of the rapid progress in science and the arts, we should witness such evidences of bigotry and superstition, and such a retrogression toward the “Cimmerian darkness” which spread like a pall over the ancient world? If there was ever a monomania on any subject, it is on the part of those who have, without knowledge or investigation, denounced so madly these “Spiritual Manifestations.” I find no fault with those who do not believe in them; but I can not withhold an expression of my surprise that intelligent minds can be found to denounce those who do investigate them.

To vindicate myself therefore from these aspersions, I inclose you a copy of a letter, which I wrote early last January, to the Hon. James F. Simmons, formerly United States Senator from Rhode Island. The letter was written in the confidence of private friendship, and not intended for the public eye. Such as it is, however, I send it to you, and ask, as an act of justice, that you will publish it, together with this letter, in the *National Intelligencer*.

You need not be told who James F. Simmons is. He occupied a seat for several years with me in the Senate of the United States; and among all the members of that body you did not number two better friends. We were both deemed capable, at that time, of examining satisfactorily any question of finance or of political economy on which we might be engaged. But now, because we have thoroughly investigated these “Spiritual Manifestations,” and believe in their truth, we are included in the general, and Judge Edmonds in the particular, denunciations of this writer. I have given the character of Judge Edmonds in my letter to Mr. Simmons; and I will only add here, in reference to the retailed slander and sneering remark of the writer, in regard to his decisions, that, as a judge, he unites the qualities of two of the brightest luminaries of the English

bench, namely, the profundity of Bacon with the intuition of Mansfield.

Very respectfully yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

LETTER TO MR. SIMMONS (*above alluded to*).

WASHINGTON, January 10, 1858.

My dear Sir—I was pleased to see in the January number of "Putnam's Monthly," a statement of your experience in "Spiritual Manifestations." In our conversation at Washington, during the last session of Congress, you had stated the same to me.

My experience is, probably, more limited than yours; but yours has served, in some measure, to strengthen the impressions made on my own mind, by the investigation I have given to this mysterious subject.

I had heard for a long time of the "Rochester Knockings," but had paid no heed to them; on the contrary, had considered them a delusion, which would soon pass away. I continued under these impressions till some time last spring, when my attention was called to a newspaper attack on Judge Edmonds for being a believer in these "Spiritual Manifestations." I had known Judge Edmonds for thirty years; had practiced law in the same courts; had served in the Senate of New York with him; had been associated with him also as a member of the Court for the Correction of Errors, the highest court in the State; had known him since that time as a Justice of the Supreme Court, and more recently as a Judge of the Court of Appeals, where he holds a deservedly high and distinguished rank among his brethren, the able judges of that court of last resort in the State of New York. I also knew him as a gentleman of finished classical education, and as a lawyer of an acute mind, and a decided talent for investigation. And, above all, I knew him to be a man of unimpeachable integrity. Knowing all these things, I concluded that if he had become a believer in "Spiritual Manifestations," it was at least a subject worthy of investigation.

Accordingly, I determined to investigate it as opportunity should present. I thought I could bring to bear on it a pretty good share of common sense and a reasonable talent for investigation. And knowing, withal, that I had not a great deal of enthusiasm in my

composition, I believed I could enter upon the investigation without much danger of being carried away by any delusion.

In this frame of mind I commenced the investigation of this subject, being an entire unbeliever, but entering upon it with a sincere desire to ascertain the truth. I will not trouble you with the facts which were developed in the progress of my investigation. Suffice it to say, they were of the most astounding character. I soon became satisfied of two things: first, that the "medium" did not know from whence the "rape" proceeded; secondly, that she did not know from whence the communications came. Perhaps I ought in this connection to observe that, in pursuing this investigation, all my questions were propounded *mentally*. The medium did not and could not know what they were, and of course could not tell what answers to give, or what would be appropriate responses to the questions thus mentally propounded.

Objectors can not deny that these answers came from an *intelligent* source; but they sometimes say that they are to be found in the mind of the interrogator. It is true that the interrogator oftentimes knows the answer to the question *mentally* propounded by him; and it is equally true that he frequently does *not* know what the appropriate answer should be, but ascertains its truth afterward. Neither can he in any way anticipate many communications which are made without any questions being asked. I have frequently received such communications of an elevated character, and far above the capacity of the medium. I conclude, therefore, they do not come from the medium, nor from the mind of the interrogator.

These communications, too, are perfectly characteristic of the individuals from whom they purport to come. I have had frequent communications purporting to come from my old friend, John C. Calhoun, which his intimate friends would pronounce perfectly characteristic of him; and some of them, both in style and sentiment, worthy of him in his palmiest days in the Senate of the United States. I have had similar ones purporting to come from Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, of the same elevated order, and peculiarly characteristic of the individual. I can make the same remark of other individuals.

I have seen rapping mediums, writing mediums, and speaking mediums, and have received communications through all of them. I have witnessed physical manifestations, such as the movement of

tables, without any visible agency. These *physical* manifestations are more satisfactory to the mass of mankind, because they appeal directly to the senses. I am better pleased myself with the *moral*, if I may so call them, than the physical manifestations.

The next question is, from whence do these manifestations, whether physical or moral, proceed? Judge Edmonds was told that they were all according to natural laws, which would in due time be fully developed; and he was directed to read Von Reichenbach's "Dynamics of Magnetism and Electricity" (a book he had never heard of before), as a means of enabling him to understand these laws. I have read the book myself. The writer proves conclusively the discovery of a new element, which he calls *od*, or the *odic force*. He proves that this element pervades not only the human system, but the material world and the whole universe. He finds it in the rays of the sun, moon, and stars. Late English writers of high reputation consider the existence of the *odic force* as well established as that of magnetism and electricity. It combines many of the qualities of the two latter, and is antagonistic to some of them. It may be presumed, therefore, that this newly-discovered element enters, in some sort, into these manifestations. It is said that this accounts for the *physical* manifestations. But no one can show *how* this force produces them. And even if this were proved, it still remains to account for the *intelligence* in the communications which are received. That intelligence does not come from tables, or chairs, or other material objects. It must come from mind, or from a spiritual source. This new element may be the medium of conveying it to us. To illustrate, let me suppose that a friend in New York wishes to communicate with me in Washington. He sends his communication to me through the electric telegraph. The communication is received and written down here, the same as a communication is received and written down through the rapping medium. I ask how is that communication from my friend conveyed to me? The answer is, by the electric fluid. But does the electric fluid *make* the communication? The answer is no; the *mind* of my friend does that. So in the case of the rapping medium, the communication comes from some source of *intelligence*. This intelligence, as every one knows who has investigated these matters, does not come from the table that is moved by some invisible power, nor from the medium, nor from any one present. It is therefore to be inferred that it comes from a spirit-

ual source, and more especially when communications are received on subjects exclusively known to those communicating.

Some have attempted to account for all those things by mesmerism, clairvoyance, and psychology. Let it be remembered that twelve or fifteen years ago, mesmerism, clairvoyance, etc., were as much denounced as "Spiritual Rappings" are now. They were called humbugs and jugglery then, as these manifestations are at this day. This prejudice and denunciation continued in England till the publication of the philosophical treatise of the Rev. Mr. Townshend, which changed the whole current of public sentiment. There have been many able publications on these subjects since that time, and they are now considered as well established as magnetism or electricity. Suppose these denunciations had deterred philosophical minds from investigating them, how much light would have been lost to science and the world? Now, all the magic, the mysteries, the witchcraft, and necromancy of the ancient world, from the time of the Delphic Oracle, are explained by these modern investigations; and all popular delusions, however exaggerated, are now shown to have truth for their basis. I have read many of the ablest writers on these subjects; but to my mind not one of them has been able to account for these "Spiritual Manifestations." Hence the greater importance of continuing these investigations. To denounce, therefore, those engaged in them is as unwise as it is unphilosophical; and more especially if such denunciations come from those who never witnessed any of the facts and manifestations which have convinced the judgments of men equally intelligent, equally honest, and as little likely to be deluded as themselves.

But what is the objection to investigating this matter? Is it feared that there may be some discrepancies between the religious sentiments communicated and the tenets of the different religious denominations among us? Such discrepancies are heard every Sunday from our different pulpits throughout the land. And still all denominations of Christians, though differing about particular tenets, maintain the great and leading doctrines of Christianity. And from the investigation I have given the subject, I agree with the Rev. Adin Ballou, who has written the most candid and satisfactory explanation I have seen, that "*whatever of divine fundamental principle, absolute truth, and essential righteousness there is in the Bible, in the popular religion, and in the established Churches, will stand. It can*

not be done away. On the contrary, it will be corroborated and fulfilled by Spirit Manifestations."

It has been objected, that there have been cases of derangement arising from these manifestations. If there be such cases, I apprehend they are less numerous than they have been represented, and may have arisen from other causes than the one to which they have been attributed. But be that as it may, and be the number great or small, it has no possible bearing on this question. Derangement has often followed from religious excitement, and the over-excited passions of the human heart. Still this is no objection to the investigation of the truths of religion, or of the emotions and passions of our nature. Neither is it an objection to investigating the subject under consideration. Denunciations can not stop it, but, on the contrary, tend to encourage it. But for the denunciations of Judge Edmonds, an old acquaintance and friend, I doubt whether my attention would have been called to it. If it be true, it should be known; for great and mighty results must follow. Already we hear of many who have been converted from infidelity, and now proclaim the immortality of the soul, and that "death is" *not* "an eternal sleep." If it be not true, that can only be ascertained by investigation; and the sooner it be done the better. In either case, therefore, all good citizens, all intelligent minds, should unite in ascertaining the truth or falsity of this, the greatest phenomenon of the present or any preceding age.

It is understood to be a general belief, at this day, among all Christian denominations, that spirits visit this earth; that they attend us; that they impress us, and thereby protect us from accident and danger. Every one's own experience will confirm the truth of this observation. A communication to me, purporting to come from Mr. Calhoun, conveys the same idea; wherein he says, "We, by our united will, acting upon spirits clothed in flesh, influence them to perform duties which benefit mankind." If, then, such be the general belief, is it any great stretch of that belief, after the astounding facts we have seen and heard, to suppose that there may have been discovered a mode by which spirits can now communicate with us, in addition to attending and impressing us, and that they are permitted so to do? To my mind the conclusion is perfectly rational and philosophical. With all the evidences of progress which surround us here, how can we discard such evidences from the

spirit-world, which is believed to be one of "everlasting progression."

Many persons, unable to resist the evidence of the spiritual source of these communications, are finally compelled to admit them, and, as a last resort, charge them as emanating from evil spirits. I consider this as giving up the controversy. There *may* be communications from evil spirits. But that does not conflict with the communications which bear internal evidence of coming from the "spirits of just men made more perfect." There is an abundance of communications purporting to come from such a source, and of the purest, most elevated, and most religious character. If the "evil one" has prompted these, I confess I have heretofore formed a very wrong estimate of his character.

On the whole, the result of my investigations thus far is, that the weight of evidence is in favor of the truth of these "Spiritual Manifestations." But I shall continue to investigate as opportunity offers. And if, hereafter, the preponderance of evidence shall incline to the other side, I shall as readily announce that result, as I have above communicated the other.

In the mean time, let us exercise all possible charity for those who do not believe; and especially those who denounce without investigation and condemn without knowledge; for they are those that most need it.

Excuse this desultory communication, and accept the assurance of the high respect and esteem with which I am, very truly, yours,

HON. JAMES P. SIMMONS.

N. P. TALLMADGE.

The next appeared originally in the *New York Tribune*, communicated by the lady to whom it was addressed:

BALTIMORE, *Tuesday, April 12, 1853*

Dear Madam—I seize a few leisure moments, while detained here a short time on business, to give you a more extended account of the "Physical Manifestations" to which I alluded in a former letter. In this account, I shall confine myself to those which purport to come from the spirit of JOHN C. CALHOUN.

I have received numerous communications from him, from the commencement of my investigation of this subject down to the present time. Those communications have been received through rap-

ping mediums, writing mediums, and speaking mediums. They are of the most extraordinary character. In style and sentiment they would do honor to him in his best days on earth.

After the arrival of the Misses Fox in Washington city, in February last, I called on them by appointment, and at once received a communication from Calhoun.

I then wrote down and propounded *mentally* the following question :

Can you *do* any thing (meaning physical manifestations) to confirm me in the truth of these revelations, and to remove from my mind the least shadow of unbelief?

To which I received the following answer :

I will give you a communication on Monday, at half-past seven o'clock. Do not fail to be here. I will then give you an explanation.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

It is proper here to remark, that all the communications referred to in this letter were made by Calhoun after a call for the alphabet, and were rapped out, letter by letter, and taken down by me in the usual way. They were made in the presence of the Misses Fox and their mother.

I called on Monday at the hour appointed, and received the following communication :

My friend, the question is often put to you, "What good can result from these manifestations?" I will answer it :

It is to draw mankind together in harmony, and convince skeptics of the immortality of the soul.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

This reminds me that, in 1850, at Bridgeport, in the presence of other mediums, among many questions put and answers received, were the following—the answer purporting to come from W. E. CHANNING.

Q.—What do spirits propose to accomplish by these new manifestations?

A.—To unite mankind, and to convince skeptical minds of the immortality of the soul.

The coincidence in sentiment of the answer of J. C. Calhoun and of W. E. Channing in regard to the object of these manifestations is remarkable, and worthy of particular notice. The concurrence of two such great minds, whether in or out of the body, on a subject

so engrossing, can not fail to command the attention of every admirer of exalted intellect and moral purity.

During the above communication of Calhoun, the table moved occasionally, perhaps a foot, first one way and then the other. After the communication closed, we all moved back from the table, from two to four feet—*so that no one touched it*. Suddenly it moved from the position it occupied some three or four feet—rested a few moments—and then moved back again to its original position. Then it again moved as far the other way, and returned to the place it started from. One side of it was then raised, and stood for a few moments at an angle of about thirty-five degrees, and then again rested on the floor as usual.

The table was a large, heavy, round one, at which ten or a dozen persons might be seated at dinner. *During all these movements no person touched it, nor was any one near it*. After seeing it raised in the manner above mentioned, I had the curiosity to test its weight by raising it myself. I accordingly took my seat by it—placed my hands under the leaf, and exerted as much force as I was capable of in that sitting posture, and could not raise it a particle from the floor. I then stood up, in the best possible position to exert the greatest force—took hold of the leaf, and still could not raise it with all the strength I could apply. I then requested the three ladies to take hold around the table, and try altogether to lift it. We lifted upon it until the leaf and top began to crack, and did not raise it a particle. We then desisted, fearing we should break it. I then said, "Will the spirits permit me to raise the table?" I took hold alone, and raised it without difficulty!

After this the following conversation ensued:

Q.—Can you raise the table entirely from the floor?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Will you raise me with it?

A.—Yes; get me the square table.

The square table was of cherry, with four legs—a large-sized tea-table. It was brought out and substituted for the round one, the leaves being raised. I took my seat on the center; the three ladies sat at the sides and end, their hands and arms resting upon it. This, of course, added to the weight to be raised, namely, my own weight and the weight of the table. Two legs of it were

then raised about six inches from the floor; and then the other two legs were raised to a level of the first, *so that the whole table was suspended in the air about six inches above the floor*. While thus seated on it, I could feel a gentle, vibratory motion, as if floating in the atmosphere. After being thus suspended in the air for a few moments, the table was gently let down again to the floor!

Some pretend to say that these physical manifestations are made by electricity! I should like to know by what laws of electricity known to us, a table is at one time riveted, as it were, to the floor, against all the force that could be exerted to raise it; and at another time raised entirely from the floor with more than two hundreds of pounds weight upon it?

At a subsequent meeting Calhoun directed me to bring three bells and a guitar. I brought them accordingly. The bells were of different sizes—the largest like a small-sized dinner bell. He directed a drawer to be put under the square table. I put under a bureau drawer, bottom side up. He directed the bells to be placed on the drawer. The three ladies and myself were seated at the table, with our hands and arms resting on it. The bells commenced ringing in a sort of chime. Numerous raps were made, as if beating time to a march. The bells continued to ring, and to chime in with the beating of time. The time of the march was slow and solemn. It was beautiful and perfect. The most fastidious ear could not detect any discrepancy in it.

The raps then ceased, and the bells rang violently for several minutes. A bell was then pressed on my foot, my ankle, and my knee. This was at different times repeated. Knocks were made *most vehemently* against the under side of the table, so that a large tin candlestick was, by every blow, raised completely from the table by the concussion!

I afterward examined the under side of the table (which it will be recollected was of cherry), and found *indentations* in the wood, made by the end of the handle of the bell, which was tipped with brass. Could electricity make those violent knocks with the handle of the bell, causing indentations, and raising the candlestick from the table at every blow? Or was it done by the same invisible power that riveted the table to the floor, and again raised it, with all the weight upon it, entirely above the floor?

Here the ringing of the bells ceased, and then I felt sensibly and

distinctly the impression of a hand on my foot, ankle, and knee. These manifestations were several times repeated.

I was then directed to put the guitar on the drawer. We were all seated as before, with our hands and arms resting on the table.

The guitar was touched softly and gently, and gave forth sweet and delicious sounds, like the accompaniment to a beautiful and exquisite piece of music. It then played a sort of symphony, in much louder and bolder tones. And, as it played, these harmonious sounds, becoming soft and sweet and low, began to recede, and grew fainter and fainter, till they died away on the ear in the distance. Then they returned, and grew louder and nearer, till they were heard again, in full and gushing volume as when they commenced.

I am utterly incapable of giving any adequate idea of the beauty and harmony of this music. I have heard the guitar touched by the most delicate and scientific hands, and heard from it, under such guidance, the most splendid performances. But never did I hear any thing that fastened upon the very soul like these prophetic strains drawn out by an invisible hand from the spirit-world. While listening to it, I was ready to exclaim, in the language of the Bard of Avon:

" That strain again—it had a dying fall ;
O it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor."

After the music had ceased, the following communication was received :

This is my hand that touches you and the guitar.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

At another time, the following physical manifestation was made in the presence of Gen. Hamilton, Gen. Waddy Thompson, of South Carolina, and myself :

We were directed to place the Bible on a drawer under the table. I placed it there, completely closed. It was a small pocket Bible, with very fine print. Numerous raps were then heard, beating time to "Hail Columbia," which had been called for. Soon the sounds began to recede, and grew fainter and fainter, till, like the music of the guitar, they died away in the distance. The alphabet was then

called for, and it was rapped out, "Look." I looked on the drawer and found the Bible open. I took it up, and carefully kept it open at the place as I found it. On bringing it to the light, I found it open at St. John's gospel—chapter ii. being on the left side, and chapter iii. being on the right side. I said :

Q.—Do you wish us to look at chapter ii. ?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you wish us to look at chapter iii. ?

A.—Yes.

And it was then said, "Read." I commenced reading the chapter, and significant and emphatic raps were given at many verses ; and at verses 8, 11, 19, 34 *most vehement* raps were given. By looking at these verses, you will appreciate the significancy and intelligence of this emphatic demonstration. This manifestation purported to come from Calhoun, who had previously invited us three gentlemen to be present at a particular hour.

In reflecting on the preceding manifestations, one can not but marvel at the power by which they are made, and the *intelligence* by which that power is directed. And it would seem impossible for one to doubt the source of that intelligence. If, however, doubt should still remain on the mind of any one acquainted with similar manifestations, that doubt must be entirely dispelled by the account of the manifestation which follows :

I was present, by Calhoun's appointment, with the Misses Fox and their mother. We were seated at the table as heretofore, our hands and arms resting upon it. I was directed to put paper and pencil on the drawer. I placed several sheets of unruled letter paper, together with a wood pencil on it. I soon heard the sound of the pencil on the paper. It was then rapped out :

Get the pencil and sharpen it.

I looked under the table, but did not see the pencil. At length I found it lying diagonally from me, three or four feet from the table. The lead was broken off within the wood. I sharpened it, and again put it on the drawer. Again I heard the sound of the pencil on the paper. On being directed to look at the paper I discovered pencil-marks on each side of the outer sheet, but no writing. Then was received the following communication :

The power is not enough to write a sentence. This will show you that I

can write. If you meet on Friday, precisely at seven, I will write a short sentence.

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

We met, pursuant to appointment—took our seats at the table, our hands and arms resting on it as usual. I placed the paper, with my silver-cased pencil, on the drawer, and said :

My friend, I wish the sentence to be in your own handwriting, so that your friends will recognize it.

He replied :

You will know the writing.

He then said :

Have your minds on the spirit of John C. Calhoun.

I soon heard a rapid movement of the pencil on the paper, and a rustling of the paper, together with a movement of the drawer. I was then directed to look under the drawer. I looked, and found my pencil outside of the drawer, near my feet, but found no paper on the drawer where I placed it. On raising up the drawer I discovered the paper all under it. The sheets were a little deranged, and on examining I found on the outside sheet these words :

"I'm with you still."

I afterward showed the "sentence" to Gen. James Hamilton, former Governor of South Carolina, Gen. Waddy Thompson, former Minister to Mexico, Gen. Robert B. Campbell, late Consul at Havana, together with other intimate friends of Calhoun, and also to one of his sons, all of whom are as well acquainted with his handwriting as their own, and they all pronounced it to be a perfect *fac simile* of the handwriting of JOHN C. CALHOUN.

Gen. Hamilton stated a fact in connection with this writing of great significance. He says that Calhoun was in the habit of writing "I'm" for "I am," and that he has numerous letters from him where the abbreviation is thus used.

Mrs. Gen. Macomb has stated the same fact to me. She says that her husband, the late Gen. Macomb, has shown to her Calhoun's letters to him, where this abbreviation "I'm" was used for "I am," and spoke of it as a peculiarity of Calhoun.

How significant, then, does this fact become! We have not only the most unequivocal testimony to the handwriting itself, but, lest

any skeptic should suggest the possibility of an imitation or a counterfeit, this abbreviation, peculiar to himself, and known only to his most intimate friends, and which no imitator or counterfeiter could know, is introduced by way of putting such a suggestion to flight forever!

This "sentence" is perfectly characteristic of Calhoun. It contains his terseness of style and his condensation of thought. It is a text from which volumes might be written. It proves,

1. The immortality of the soul.
2. The power of spirits to revisit the earth.
3. Their ability to communicate with relatives and friends.
4. The identity of the spirit to all eternity.

How one's soul expands with these sublime conceptions! How resistless is this testimony of their truth! How surprising that men can doubt, when this flood of living light is poured upon them by spirits who, in the language of Webster, "revel in the glory of the eternal light of God."

Very truly, yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

MRS. SARAH HELEN WHITMAN, *Providence, R. I.*

The third appeared also in the *National Intelligencer*:

FOND DU LAC, WIS., *May, 31, 1853.*

MESSRS. GALES & SEATON:

I beg leave to make a few remarks in relation to a communication in the *Intelligencer* of the 26th instant, signed D. R. HUNDLEY. After what we have seen and heard from other sources, it is refreshing to be permitted by this writer to pursue our investigations of the "spiritual manifestations" without the fear of "hangings" or "burnings," or the terror of the "strong arm of the law." I hope, hereafter, that the same common sense will characterize the communications of others.

Mr. Hundley concedes also another point, namely, that these physical manifestations and rappings are not the result of imposture, nor of electricity or magnetism. He believes them to proceed from Von Reichenbach's newly-discovered *odic* force. This may be true. But does this prove that the source of them is not spiritual? We have communications saying that these things are according to natural laws, and that the time will come when they will no longer

appear mysterious. This odic force *may* be the medium by which spirits make these physical manifestations. The Rev. Charles Beecher, in his elaborate report, assumes the hypothesis that "*spirits can only obtain access through prepared odylic conditions*;" that this was the mode of communication by the prophets, and to substitute any other theory "*cuts up by the roots large portions of the prophetic scriptures.*" And he adds, "*whenever odylic conditions are right, spirits can no more be repressed from communicating than water from jetting through the crevices of a dyke.*" Mr. Beecher concludes by saying:

"Whatever physiological law accounts for odyllic phenomena in all ages, will in the end inevitably carry itself through the whole Bible, where it deals with the phenomena of soul and body as mutually related, acting and reacting. A large portion of the Bible, its prophecies, ecstasies, visions, trances, theophanies, and angelophanies, are more or less tinged with odyllic characteristics. The physiology, the anthropology of the Bible is highly odyllic, and must be studied as such. As such it will be found to harmonize with the general principles of human experience in such matters in all ages. If a theory be adopted everywhere else but in the Bible, excluding spiritual intervention by odyllic channels *in toto*, and accounting for every thing physically, then will the covers of the Bible prove but pasteboard barriers. Such a theory will sweep its way through the Bible and its authority; its plenary inspirations will be annihilated."

This is the conclusion to which the Rev. Mr. Beecher arrived after a long, careful, and patient investigation of this subject. If, therefore, the *odic* force enters into these physical manifestations, it is only the means by which they are produced from a spiritual source. On this principle is explained the physical manifestations referred to by your correspondent.

But admitting, for the sake of the argument, that these physical manifestations are produced by this newly-discovered *odic* force, without any spiritual agency, still your correspondent has not yet advanced even beyond the A B C of spiritualism. Even this admission does not aid him at all in his opposition to the spiritual theory. When intelligent answers are received to questions mentally propounded, what is the *source* of that *intelligence*? It is not the *odic* force. It can not *make* an intelligent communication, any more than electricity can make one which is transmitted through the electric telegraph. In the latter case the *mind* of the person communicating makes the communication, and electricity is the means of conveying

it to us. So in the former case the communication comes from *mind*. It is not the mind of the medium nor of the interrogator; it must, therefore, come from a spiritual source, and the *odic* force, like electricity in the other case, *may* be the means of conveying it to us.

I would here close what I intended to say, were it not for the extraneous, inappropriate, and undignified matter which occupies a very considerable portion of your correspondent's communication. He has fallen into the same error with many others, who seem to fancy that spiritualism is to be put down and annihilated by harsh language, gross denunciations, and low and vulgar epithets. Your correspondent may plead the example of others before he plumed his pen for such a contest. But let him be assured that neither he nor those who have preceded him will accomplish their object by such a course. This matter is to be contested on the field of fair argument and gentlemanly discussion. The language of your correspondent is not suited to the occasion nor to the subject. It is too late in the day to attempt by such means to stifle investigation. Neither the denunciations from the press nor the anathemas from the pulpit can stop it, notwithstanding the self-sufficiency of the one and the self-complacency of the other. Much less can it be arrested in its onward march by the kind of warfare introduced by your correspondent. In this land of civil liberty and religious freedom men will think and act for themselves.

Admitting all that your correspondent has said of Von Reichenbach's newly-discovered force, backed as it is by other high authority, still that does not impugn the theory that those manifestations are from a spiritual source, and this new force the means of conveying it to us. The reputation of these philosophers required no defense at his hands, much less such a defense as he has attempted. It was therefore as undignified as it was improper and unnecessary to characterize the spiritual theory as "the whims and maudlin fancies of aged grandmothers, or the flippant vagaries of youthful patrons of the band-box and worshipers of lace and ribbons," and its advocates as the "weak-minded excuses for manhood," with "an ass's appendages to their heads."

I will not stop to inquire who is the denunciator in this case; your readers will judge for themselves. But I may be permitted to ask, who are those to whom this dignified and gentlemanly language is applied? Why, they are those who have had the independence and

moral courage to investigate this subject—some of the brightest intellects in the country, the ablest to investigate, and the last to be carried away with a delusion. Such are the men brought within the category of this writer. And what is the subject which he deems so utterly unworthy of investigation? It is the greatest phenomenon of this or any preceding age. It has spread throughout this country, and thousands of mediums are being developed in every direction. It is now spreading in Europe. Recent accounts inform us that Lord Brougham and Dr. Ashburner, of England, and others of the highest rank and intellect, have become converts to it, and that it has engaged the earnest attention of the most eminent German philosophers. And when we hear of such “aged grandmothers,” such “youthful patrons of the band-box and worshipers of lace and ribbons,” and such “weak-minded excuses for manhood,” with “an ass’s appendages to their heans,” as Lord Brougham and Dr. Ashburner, of England, and Judge Edmonds, and others of the highest order of intellect in this country, becoming converts to it, we are gravely called upon to listen to the dignified, elevated, and gentlemanly appeals of your correspondent and others on this side of the Atlantic, who denounce it as unworthy of investigation!

After all, what is this “horrid monster” against which these envenomed weapons are directed with such deadly aim? Let the chosen and selected language of your correspondent give his views on the subject. Referring to your Tallahassee correspondent, he says: “The gentleman himself can not have seen, nor can any one else have seen, with greater pain than I have, the wide-spread contagion of the spiritual delusion; nor can he deplore more than myself the long catalogue of evils which have resulted from its spread—the insanity, the lost peace of mind, the denial of the Bible as the book of God, and all the foul-mouthed blasphemies and thousand-and-one crude and undigested fancies with which it has filled the hearts and heads of those who are so weak of judgment as to be captivated by it.”

After a back-handed compliment to New England for her predisposition for witchcraft and the higher law, the writer adds: “But, now that the cool-headed and placid-minded citizens of the South are becoming the dupes of these modern communicants with the devil, I am reluctantly forced to contemplate the enormous evils,

the great social and moral derangement, which must inevitably result from permitting such a monster of absurdity to stalk in our midst, unshorn of its Gorgon locks, which turn reason and common sense into stone, and make the immortal part of man bow down before its shapeless hideousness, and give to itself that adoration due only to the Father of Spirits."

These are "brave words," but they are "full of sound and fury, signifying—nothing." I have given the above quotations, that your readers may once more be refreshed by the style of denunciation to which I have before alluded, and that they may see the whole length and breadth of this "tempest in a tea-pot."

I undertake to say that there is no possible cause nor excuse for the paroxysm into which this writer has thrown himself. Let us analyze these quotations, and see if we can discover any. Stripped of their verbiage, they resolve themselves into the following, as the effects resulting from these spiritual manifestations.

1. *Insanity.*—This is an old threadbare objection, much exaggerated, and which would apply with much greater force to the Christian religion, where the number of insane from religious excitement is as a hundred to one to those from modern spiritualism. But be the number great or small, it is no possible objection to the investigation of this subject.

2. *Lost Peace of Mind.*—Peace of mind is restored instead of lost by the investigation and belief in spiritual manifestations. Every one's experience and observation prove this; and none but those entirely ignorant of the subject would pretend to gainsay it.

3. *The Denial of the Bible as the Book of God.*—This charge is utterly without foundation. The spiritual theory and spiritual communications maintain all the great and leading doctrines of Christianity. In regard to the Bible, I can not better express my views than in the language of the Rev. Adin Ballou, namely, "whatever of divine fundamental principle, absolute truth, and essential righteousness there is in the Bible, in the popular religion, and in the established churches will stand. It can not be done away. On the contrary, it will be corroborated and fulfilled by spirit-manifestations." If the gentleman wants any better doctrine than this, he will not find it in the Bible.

4. *Foul-mouthed Blasphemies and undigested Fancies.*—I have devoted much time to the investigation of this subject, and have

never seen any thing to justify this charge. I conclude, therefore, it is the offspring of a distempered imagination.

5. *Enormous Evils, great Social and Moral Derangement.*—So far from this charge being true, the reverse is the fact. And the great good to result from these manifestations, as we are told from a high source, "is to bring mankind together in harmony, and convince skeptics of the immortality of the soul." These results have been already signally evinced.

6. *To give to this Monster, Adoration due only to the Father of Spirits.*—This charge has not the least shadow of foundation to support it. On the contrary, there is not to be found in all Christendom such devoted and unadulterated adoration to the Father of all Spirits as characterizes the believers in "spiritual manifestations."

After the above brief analysis, one is lost in wonder and astonishment that men's minds can be so wrought up about nothing, absolutely nothing. If there ever was a monomania in this world, it is on the part of those who, without investigation and without knowledge, undertake to denounce these "spiritual manifestations."

Let me scan this subject for one moment, and present one simple view, which, it seems to me, comprises the whole in a nut-shell. It is the belief of all Christian denominations at the present day that departed spirits revisit the earth, that they attend us, that they impress us to go or not to go, to do or not to do, for our good. Every one's experience will satisfy him of the truth of this remark. What then follows? If spirits visit us, attend us, and impress us for our good, what is the objection to believing that a mode is now discovered by which they can communicate with us? There can be no possible objection provided the facts justify that belief. If the one is for our good, the other is still more for our good. If the facts justify it, the conclusion is both reasonable and philosophical. Do the facts justify it? I undertake to say they do. I undertake to say, too, that no intelligent mind that investigates with a sincere desire to ascertain the truth, and has the opportunity so to do, can come to any other conclusion. What, then, is the result of all this mighty outcry, as if heaven and earth were coming together? Why, simply, that it has been ascertained that spirits can communicate with us, in addition to impressing us! This is the whole length and breadth of it. "It hath this extent, no more."

Very respectfully, yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

POSTSCRIPT.

Messrs. Editors—Since writing the above, my attention has been called to an article in the *Intelligencer* of the 24th instant, headed "Spiritual Manifestations," which, in the multiplicity of business avocations, I entirely overlooked. The writer, it seems, is the author of the article to which I alluded in my first communication, and which I assumed could not have been written by you.

As I then remarked, I have in this, as in all other matters since I retired from public life, endeavored "to avoid public observation." I have never had any desire to engage in a public discussion of this mysterious subject. I have been willing that all shall enjoy their own opinions and express them in any proper manner most agreeable to themselves. And I never should have troubled the public with any remarks of mine but for the atrocious doctrines put forth by this writer, and his unmeasured and vindictive denunciations of all engaged in the investigation of the subject. When such sentiments were promulgated through your widely-extended journal, with the apparent sanction of your names, I thought it due to myself to enter my solemn protest against them. And to vindicate myself from the aspersions of this writer, I requested you to publish my letter to the Hon. James F Simmons, containing my views on this subject—a letter written in the confidence of private friendship, and couched in the mildest and most charitable language toward all who differed with me in opinion. I do not object to any argument which this writer or any other gentleman may see fit to put forth on this subject. For aught I care, he may have the whole field of argument to himself. I have no wish to proselytize. But I will not stand by and tamely submit to the wholesale denunciations of this writer, and the low and vulgar epithets of others, because I have seen fit to exercise the right, guaranteed by the constitution under which we live, of investigating, entertaining, and expressing, in a proper manner, any opinions I please on political, religious, or any other subjects. And when this writer threatens to invoke "legislative enactment," and to "suppress by the strong hand of the law" the investigation of this matter, I beg leave to say to him, in all candor and sincerity, if he could be gratified in this Christian aspiration, he will have kindled a flame throughout this land of civil

and religious freedom which will consume every vestige of bigotry and intolerance by which he is surrounded.

The writer says I "grossly misrepresented" him when I attributed to him a spirit which would "invoke the Salem hangings and the fires of Smithfield." I am glad to learn that he entertains no such spirit. But let us see how far my remark was justified by his language. He says, "It has been effectively urged by a luminous scientific writer, that, although the *Salem hangings* were cruel, useless, and illegitimate as punishments for crime—more particularly for a crime which did not exist, communication with the demon—they *might have been necessary* in order to cut short the growth of a horrible and contagious species of monomania; and that there may yet arise, at future periods, similar and analogous disorders of the popular mind, invading and corrupting the whole body politic, which it may *in like manner* become necessary to suppress by the strong hand of the law. Indeed, we might point, *as already coming within this category*, the *Rochester knockings*, with their kindred train of, rascalities and abominations." I have made the above quotation to show that I am not obnoxious to the charge of gross misrepresentation. If the "*Salem hangings* might have been necessary;" if it might, "*in like manner*, become necessary to suppress by the strong hand of the law similar or analogous disorders of the popular mind," and if the "*Rochester knockings*" were pointed at by the writer "*as already coming within this category*," I say no logical mind can come to any other conclusion than that the writer was in favor of suppressing by law, "*in like manner*," these disorders as they were suppressed at Salem, namely, by "*hangings*!" But he says he did not so intend to be understood; that he only meant that they should be suppressed by "legislative enactments," "under the heaviest penalties."

Having thus vindicated myself from the charge of gross misrepresentation, I cheerfully leave the writer to declare his own intentions as to what he did mean. And although he still intends to inflict on us poor investigators the "heaviest penalties" of the laws, still we shall feel under great obligation to him, and shall breathe easier and freer when we are assured that the *halter* does not come within this category of penalties.

And now, Messrs. Editors, if I were disposed to retaliate the charge of "gross misrepresentation," I could do so with perfect pro-

priety and with the strictest justice. But I will not do it. I will leave your readers to judge of the fairness and candor of the writer, after I shall have stated the facts and pointed their attention to them. A writer who is under the necessity of resorting to such means to sustain his tottering argument really excites my compassion. It is "more in sorrow than in anger," therefore, that I allude to it at all. He says, "for my assertion that the effect of these things was to subvert the authority of the Bible, and annul, not a sect or sects, but Christianity itself, I have virtually Mr. Tallmadge's and his friend Mr. Simmons' own authority in the words italicized in the letter of the latter gentleman." He then gives a *garbled* extract from my letter, *leaving out one whole line*, which goes to strengthen and give point and significancy to the whole, and then adds his own comments, which pervert the entire meaning of the sentence, and yet claims that he has virtually my own authority for his comments and his conclusion which charges me with "rank blasphemy!"

I will now introduce the sentence as it originally appeared in my letter, not garbled or eviscerated by this writer, and your readers will then judge of my opinions on this subject. I remarked: "From the investigation I have given the subject, I agree with the Rev. Adin Ballou, who has written the most candid and satisfactory explanation I have seen, that whatever of divine fundamental principle, absolute truth, and essential righteousness there is in the Bible, *in the popular religion, and in the established churches*, will stand. It can not be done away; on the contrary, will be corroborated and fulfilled by spirit-manifestations." The words in *italics* are omitted by this writer in the quotation of this extract. The extract goes to show that the Bible not only will stand, but that the "popular religion and the established churches," founded on the "divine fundamental principle, absolute truth, and essential righteousness" of the Bible, will stand also; and that it will be "corroborated and fulfilled by spirit-manifestations;" and yet this writer has the modesty to assert that this all means, "that whatever in the Bible is not confirmed by spirit-manifestations is not the truth," and of course the whole Bible authority is annulled at "one fell swoop." Such gross ignorance of all that the advocates of the spiritual theory maintain I have never seen crowded into so narrow a compass. I forgive it, because it is the "sin of ignorance," and I pity, from the bottom

of my heart, any one whose "super-serviceable zeal" leads him into such gross absurdities. If the writer had consulted the publication of the Rev. Adin Ballou, to which I referred, and from which I extracted the sentence garbled by him, he would have found a full confirmation of the construction which I gave to that sentence from the Rev. Adin Ballou himself. I will quote him once more. He says:

"Our all-wise and benignant Father in heaven has left no essential truth or righteousness dependent on the mere pretension or uncorroborated testimony either of departed or undeparted spirits. He has addressed his revelations of essential truth and duty to the moral reason of mankind, and authenticated them by every necessary attestation. Any attempt, therefore, to build up a religion or moral philosophy radically different from the genuine Christian Testament, on what is being disclosed to the world through dreamers, somnambulists, impressibles, clairvoyants, spirit-media, spirit-rappings, etc., is absurd, and must prove mischievous rather than beneficial to the human race. But fundamental truths and duties may be re-affirmed, clarified from error, demonstrated anew, and powerfully commended to the embrace of mankind by fresh spiritual communications. I am of opinion that this is really the case; and the conversion of many long-confirmed atheists and deistical rejectors of the Christian revelation confirms me in it."

If the writer had had the proper disposition in discussing this subject, he could have saved himself from the awkward and unenviable predicament in which he is placed by consulting the above quotation, instead of quoting a garbled sentence from my letter, as my authority for what he calls "rank blasphemy." I have always maintained, and still maintain, that these "spirit-manifestations" go to confirm the great and leading doctrines of Christianity. If they differ in any respect from the particular tenets of the denomination to which this writer belongs, it is no greater difference than that which he will hear from the pulpits of other denominations every Sunday of his life! And still, all denominations maintain the great and leading doctrines of Christianity, and all go to the Bible to establish the particular tenets which constitute the discrepancies between each other. Why does not this writer denounce all other denominations than his own? They differ as much from his as "spirit-manifestations" do. Why does he not make one gigantic stride, and charge them with maintaining "rank blasphemy," as he has very kindly and very courteously charged me? I make no pretension to any over-righteousness. I make no profession of any

over-zeal for the Bible, that I may thereby manifest my prowess in its defense, by tilting against a wind-mill of my own creation. Those who have known me best and longest know that I have always maintained the great truths of the Bible as the anchor of our hope; that skepticism has never darkened my mental vision; that I have contributed as much as any one, according to my ability, in the circulation of the Bible and in the building and establishment of churches to propagate the truth of its doctrines. I have seen nothing in these "spiritual manifestations" to change my opinions, but much to confirm them. And still, by a total perversion of what I have said, I am graciously charged as authority for "rank blasphemy." I bow with deep humility to the over-righteousness of this *incognito* of the *Intelligencer*, and confess with shame that, with all my efforts to live up to the doctrines of the Bible which he and I profess, I have come so far short of the requirements of that sacred volume. From the apparent sanctity which he has thrown around himself, I feel that I am following him in his career of righteousness, as Iulus followed Æneas from the flames of Troy, *haud passibus æquis*. But I am not as one without hope. From my investigation of spiritualism I am getting the "fundamental truths of the Bible reaffirmed." All I ask is to be permitted to pursue this investigation unmolested by either church or state, with the full belief that the results will make better men and better Christians of us all.

In regard to the decisions of Judge EDMONDS, the writer says he has uttered no sneers. He says: "I merely stated that it was rumored—and it is rumored widely—that the gentleman in question has consulted spirit-manifestations in regard to his decisions." And he makes this rumor, if it can be established, one ground "to show that the application of coercive measures is already and imperatively needed." Now, it was a very easy matter to ascertain the falsity of this rumor, if the writer had desired not to circulate the slander. No respectable citizens of New York would for one moment give countenance to it. Every one acquainted with Judge Edmonds knows it to be untrue. And yet this rumor is assumed as a basis for "legislative enactments" and the "heaviest penalties" of the law.

It seems that when this *monomania* seizes any of these anti-spiritual denouncers, it is accompanied by a sort of proclivity for slander from which their sanity on other subjects is exempt. I do not, therefore, incline to hold the gentleman responsible for this

retailed slander on Judge Edmonds, or his libellous charge of "rank blasphemy" on me; although he, "whether priest or layman," knows that the retailer of a slander or the republisher of a libel is equally responsible with him who originates it. But let this all pass. I can make great allowances for these monomaniacs, and would advise them, in their lucid intervals, to argue this question without denouncing those who investigate it. With that I will be content; and, so far as I am concerned, they shall have the whole field of argument to themselves. But if they continue their denunciations, I shall repel their assaults as I would the assaults of any other madmen, no matter whether they imagine themselves Don Quixotte, Hyder Ali, or *Tong Whang*!

The writer still persists in his determination to put down the investigation of this subject by the strong arm of the law. Well, let him, and those laboring under the same hallucination, persevere in their praiseworthy efforts. As the venerable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS once said on a memorable occasion, "We shall see what we shall see." In the mean time let us have the name of this writer, when entering on this crusade against civil liberty and religious freedom, emblazoned on his monomaniac banner, that his ignorant and infatuated followers may see under what sign they conquer. He has put his name at your service. I insist that you give it to the world, that the whole world may revel in the effulgence of this luminary of the nineteenth century.

Very respectfully, yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

Appendix—C.

EDWARD FOWLER'S COMMUNICATIONS.

I copy the following papers from Edward Fowler's notes of some interviews which he had, and which were given to him evidently to carry out the explanations which they were unable to give to me.

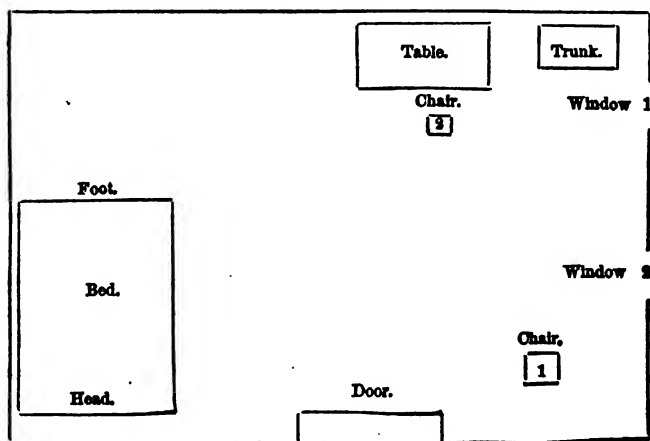
FIRST INTERVIEW.

Nov. 21, 1851.—On this night I sat at my table engaged in reading and writing until within a few minutes of twelve o'clock, when I retired.

After extinguishing my light, and before getting in bed, I noticed a bright light over my bed, which I should judge was a foot in diameter. At this I was not surprised, because I had been accustomed to see such lights, with the exception that this was brighter than usual.

I proceeded to bed, where I had lain probably five minutes, when I heard a footstep in the room.

The following diagram will aid the understanding of the statement.



My face was at the time turned toward the wall. I looked around toward the windows, and beheld a form, apparently that of a man forty years old, and a little more than six feet high walking from the center of the room toward window No. 1, where he met another man not so tall, who seemed to have come through that window. I did not see him come through, but first saw him, when one or two feet from the window on the inside. They stopped near the window and spoke with each other for a few minutes, and then came to my bedside, and the taller one said to me, "Arise and take thy pen, for I will dictate."

I made an unsuccessful attempt to rise, not to write, but to retreat from my room. I was paralyzed. I could not move a limb, had not power of articulation; in fact, I had not control of a single muscle in my body. A cold, winter breeze seemed to be chilling me through and through; I never before experienced such an indescribable feeling of horror.

The two stood by my bedside gazing at me for a few minutes, and then moved away to the table, where they were joined by a third party, who also appeared to come in by the window in the same manner as the second one. He was a small man, not over five feet six inches high, and rather slender. He had a high, open forehead, was quite bald, and appeared to be sixty or seventy years old. He had some small thing in his hand, but I did not notice what it was.

The three stood by the table conversing, when a fourth party entered. He appeared to be about sixty, medium height, and shortly built. His head was somewhat bald, and his shoulders rounded. The contour of his face resembled in a degree the portraits of Franklin, but he appeared to be more jolly than I supposed Franklin to have been.

(I have since been told, through the rappings, that it was him.)

He came in by the same window, bearing under his left arm a box about eighteen inches long, and nine in depth and width. He came to the table and sat his box thereon. Meanwhile the tall man had seated himself in chair No. 2, and the small one on the trunk.

After the four had consulted together for the space of half an hour, the first and second one came to my bedside and talked to me twenty-five or thirty minutes. I at the time fully understood what was said. Its import was very clear to my mind; but I can not

now, nor have I been ever able since to recall the first word or idea uttered.

The small man, and he who brought the box, remained at the table.

After this one had ceased to speak, the two again went to the table and joined in conversation with the other two. I could hear them talk, but could not understand their language. They were evidently speaking of me, as they often looked around at me.

After staying three hours, from twelve till three, they left, apparently going out at the same window at which they came in, the tall man going first, and the man with the box last.

I did not see them go through the window. They seemed to disappear from my sight when about a foot from the window inside.

That I really had possession of my natural senses I infer from the following circumstances:

First, I had not been asleep when the scene commenced.

Second, The Brooklyn fire-bells, which were tolling for fire when I went to bed, I could still hear, and in the course of half an hour the City Hall bell of New York gave the alarm of fire, which the church fire-bells repeated. I heard the "Rutger's Hose" go by the house, and the adjacent church bell toll the four hours as I lay awake, viz., twelve, one, two, three, and four o'clock.

SECOND INTERVIEW.

Nov. 22, 1851.—As I had but little sleep last night, I retired early (at nine) this evening, and soon fell asleep. I slept till near twelve, when I awoke, seemingly without any external provocation. I almost involuntarily looked round the room to see if my visitors were present, but found, much to my satisfaction, that they were not.

In a few minutes the clock of the church struck twelve. About five minutes passed when the tallest one of my previous evening's visitors entered the room at the same window as before, and closely followed by five others, the last one being the man with the box.

They all appeared to be in good spirits, especially the man with the box, who appeared quite gleeful, and sat his box down on the table in a careless manner.

The six conferred together for a short time, alternately glancing at me and at the box.

At length the man who brought the box stepped up to it and opened it. The top and side of the box were let down.

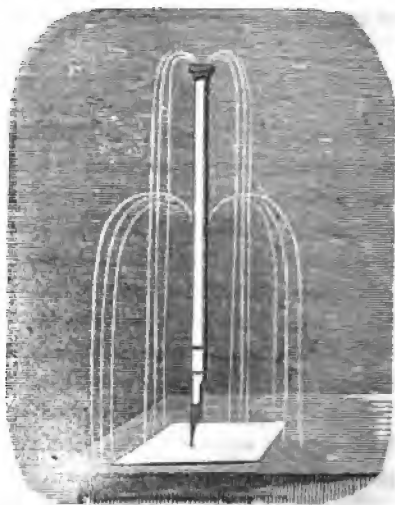
I should think they were quite one hour in arranging the machinery which was inside the box, and which occasionally emitted shafts of light resembling in appearance and vividness the flashes which occur during a severe thunder-storm.

My knife, which was highly charged with magnetic power, lay on the table, and seemed to be quite detrimental to their operations. The shafts of light seemed to be attracted to the knife, and the knife in return emitted a blue shaft of light. At length the knife was thrown upon the floor, at which they seemed to evince much satisfaction.

A sheet of paper which lay upon a shelf, one end of which overhung the table, was taken from the shelf and placed on the box cover which was unfolded upon the table. After displacing the knife, the lights seemed to form more regularly from a circular row of holes in the box cover, and the lights now, instead of being all white, were alternately white and blue, and seemed to be operating upon a steel pen which lay upon the table. The pen was several times lifted nearly perpendicular, and fell, and finally they succeeded in getting it entirely upright, and then adjusted the lights as the following sketch poorly represents :

The pen was then hopped along to the inkstand, dipped in, and then conveyed to the sheet of paper, and commenced writing. It two or three times fell, and with much difficulty was re-erected.

After occupying about five minutes in writing, the pen was dropped, and the box was rearranged and shut up by the one who brought it. They then held a conversation for a while, and at three o'clock left by the same window in the same manner as the night before, the tall man leading, and the man with the box being the last to go.



When the pen was moved, the white light was brighter on the side from which it moved, and the blue light on the side toward which it was moved.

They were all dressed as on the former occasion (that is, in long gowns), with the exception of the man with the box, who seemed to have on a sack coat, which reached down nearly to the knees and was very loose, the girdle for confining it hanging loose.

About the four new ones there was nothing remarkable.

In the morning I found the writing was executed on real paper and was five lines of Hebrew. The translation by Professor Bush proved it to be a quotation from the book of Joel, ii. 23-27.

THIRD INTERVIEW.

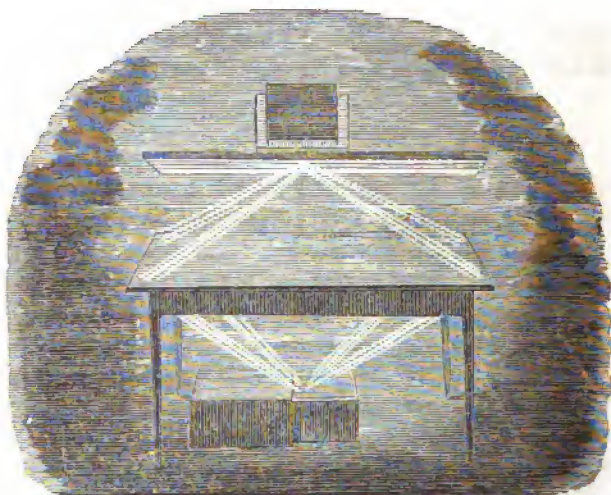
Nov. 27, 1851.—This evening I retired in company with my brother Samuel at half-past eleven o'clock, and soon fell asleep. I had slept, I know not how long, when I was awakened by a foot-step in my room. I looked around, and at the same window beheld a tall man walking toward the table, closely followed by six others. The man with the box was next to the tall one, and the small man next. The last one of the company appeared to be merely an aid, who brought another box, and retired immediately after setting it on the table.

The small man and the man with the box seemed to take the most active part in conducting this evening's operations.

The man with the box (who for brevity's sake I will call Franklin) placed one box under the table and the other on a shelf over the table. These boxes were about the same size as the other, but were different in outward construction. These two seemed to open by a drawer drawn out at the end. After the two had occupied some time in apparently arranging the machinery (during which time the tall man sat in chair No. 2), lights came from the boxes to the table, as the following sketch will represent.

The shafts of light, as before, were alternately white and blue. Whenever the white lights increased in brightness below the table and the blue above, the table would rise. The blue lights would sometimes become bright at one end of the table underneath, and not at the other end, as did also the white lights above, and then only that end of the table would move. This phenomenon was often

varied, but possessed the same general characteristics of procedure. After experimenting for some time in this manner, apparently for the purpose of showing how material objects were moved by the invisibles, the box under the table was moved out to the center of the room, and then by these same streams of light books were conveyed through the air from one box to the other, the electrical or odic lights or forces operating upon a book in a manner similar to that described in respect to the pen and table.



A A—Boxes. B—Shelf. C—Table. Lines—The lights.

The books started rapidly, moderated their speed, and descended toward the floor midway in their passage, and then increased their speed and altitude as they approached the other box.

After some time was occupied in this manner, both boxes were placed on the table, and a process of forming hands from this light was gone through with, but as my observation was not sufficient to enable me to clearly describe this, I will not attempt it.

My brother did not wake during the scene, though I several times attempted to awaken him, but was prevented by being rendered entirely powerless. I felt more composed this evening than on the former occasions. There was not a word exchanged between us.

They were dressed, and left as described in the last interview.

FOURTH INTERVIEW.

Nov. 28, 1851.—This P. M. was requested by the spirits, through the rappings, to darken my room and go into it. Accordingly I did so at twenty minutes past three.

I was in but a few minutes before the tall man entered by the same window, and in the same manner as before, followed by ten others. On their entrance the room became light as day. The light seemed to emanate from no particular point. This was also the case at the previous interviews.

This time four large boxes, apparently two feet square, were brought in by persons I had not before observed, and who retired immediately after depositing them. The man who had before brought the box (Franklin) and the small man (who I have been informed was Hahnemann) each brought a bundle.

I do not know what was done with the bundles, as in the confusion of numbers I lost sight of them, and they took nothing with them when they went away. I therefore suppose they were taken away by some of the others while my attention was drawn in another direction.

I was at the time standing near the bed. The boxes were placed one in each corner of the room. They appeared to have covers, which rested on the tops of the boxes. These covers were removed by "Franklin," and lights soon began to flow from each box, meeting at a center point at five or six feet from the floor, the meeting place gradually changing from the center of the room to nearer the table, on which lay various things, such as pens, books, paper, bandbox, wafers, ink, etc., which were with great rapidity moved off, and placed on the shelf which overhung the table. This was accomplished so quickly that I had not time to observe the order or manner in which the things were displaced. Nothing was left on the table except the pen, ink, paper, and blotting paper. The table was then, by the same peculiar action of these lights, moved nearly to the center of the room, I suppose for the purpose of getting equal power from each battery. The pen was then picked up in the same manner as before described, only with much more ease, passed into the ink-stand, and conveyed to the paper, and writing executed.

Five lines of the writing have been pronounced to be Sanscrit, and

I have not yet seen any one who can translate it. There were also seven lines in French, poorly written; they were the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses of second chapter of Joel. The Sanscrit was apparently executed with much greater ease and quickness than the French, and looks more perfect in penmanship. The most rapid could not have done it in as short a space of time as it was done. The pen fell but once this time.

I made several attempts to approach the box nearest me, with the intention of placing my hand upon it, but each time became perfectly powerless.

After the writing was completed, the lights approached and surrounded myself, grasping me round the waist in the same manner the pen was grasped, taking me from the floor and swaying me backward and forward and several times raised me so that my head touched the ceiling. I felt nothing like a hand or band touching me, but distinctly felt a sensation resembling a mild breeze. I was thus operated with for the space of half or three quarters of an hour, during which time the servant girl passed the door, which very materially impaired the operation of the boxes on that side of the room.

She afterward came to the door and rapped, at which time I was suspended several feet from the floor, and the operation of the boxes on that side of the room were so much affected that I came near falling. Her presence seemed to change the white lights to blue. The absence of the white lights seemed to render the blue ones uncontrollable, so that instead of converging to me as a point, they diverged irregularly to different parts of the room, displacing with roughness whatever chanced to lie in their line of motion. They regained their former state of controllability as soon as the girl receded from the door. The blue lights, when abstracted from the white, caused a breeze of very great coldness.

Finally, the boxes were covered again, and "Franklin," "Hahne mann," the tall man, and one of the others, took each a box and retired, the others following.

FIFTH INTERVIEW.

Nov. 30, 1851.—This evening I retired at eleven, and had scarcely got in bed when my visitors made their appearance, first the stout

man, "Franklin," then the tall man, and then the small one, "Hahnemann;" which three composed the whole of this evening's party. "Franklin" had under his arm the box which he brought on the first occasion, and placing it upon the table, he let down the cover as described in the second interview.

In the space of four or five minutes the lights began flowing or rather darting from the box in a confused manner, exhibiting those eccentric motions which are observable in the electrical bolts which occur during a thunder-storm, and violently displacing every thing which came within the range of its progress.

There were no white lights, and the blue were more intense in color than usual.

The individuals also seemed to wear an expression of apprehension or concern upon seeing how things operated, and an end to the operations was made as soon as possible.

Among other things which were displaced was a lamp, containing burning fluid, which would probably have terminated in a serious accident had it been lighted, for I found upon rising to replace it, after they had left, that considerable fluid had escaped and become wasted on the carpet. I now wonder that it escaped ignition from the effects of the electrical current.

After they had succeeded in suppressing these erratic proceedings, the stout man re-closed the box and they left by the same window as before.

Appendix—B.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH J. F. LANING.

PHILADELPHIA, *July 24th*, 1853.

HON. J. W. EDMONDS :

Dear Sir—Because we are interested in the investigation of one of the most sublime subjects that ever engaged the human mind, I feel a more fraternal freedom than I otherwise would in addressing you, an entire stranger to me. I have read with delighted interest your wonderful experience, as published, in *Spiritualism*. I am glad to see you acknowledge the great divine truth, that we are all allied to one Eternal Father, and that we should recognize the universal brotherhood of man. This is another reason why I make free to address you. My own experience has been remarkable, and is still full of interest to me, as scarcely a week passes without some new phenomenon being added to it. In Mr. Davis' last book, "*The Present Age and Inner Life*," you will find, commencing on page 162, a letter written by me, detailing in general terms what has, in part only, happened to me. Some portions of it remind me of your own case. I presume, however, you have been more fortunate than myself in satisfying your mind as to the usefulness of it. Here is my greatest trouble. I can not place implicit confidence in all I have experienced, and I sometimes fear I may be in some way hallucinated. I have been promised, or, at least, I think so, that I shall be able to do some good in this way to my fellow-man; but as yet I have done nothing. It is now almost two years since I was first sensibly influenced, and by this time I think I should be able to do something, if I am not indeed under a delusion. What I wish to ask of you is, your opinion of my case. If you will read my published letter, you will get a general idea of the peculiar manner in which I have been influenced. I had hoped Mr. Davis would be able to throw some light upon it; but after all his remarks concerning it, my mind is still in the uncertain

mood. Have you ever had things promised by the spirits which were not realized?

In my seekings I have always insisted on this one point, that the spirits should desist from influencing me, unless they were certain of accomplishing some good for others, by me; but I can not prevail upon them to do so. If I had kept a regular diary of the facts which have transpired with me, I think it would show there were at times either deceiving spirits attending me, or that my own mind is most singularly hallucinated. If I could be persuaded that good will eventually come out of it, I am patient enough, I think, to pursue my investigations further; but at times I am disheartened and am almost ready to abandon all idea of ever accomplishing any useful purpose in this way. Will it be asking too much of you to read my letter, if you please, in Mr. Davis' book, and give me your opinion respecting it?

I do not know of any one whose spiritual experience tallies with my own in all particulars; but the nearest I have read of is yours, which, in the pictorial part, seems to correspond in a degree. Yours is more reliable, and so far very useful, it seems to me.

All I desire to know is, that I can be made useful in this way, and if so, I think my mind is patient enough to pursue the subject to an available issue.

Will it be asking too much of you to write me at your convenience, and give me your opinion respecting my case?

Very respectfully, yours, etc.,

J. F. LANING.

NEW YORK, July 29th, 1858.

Dear Sir—I have yours of the 24th, and, so far as I can, I will answer it.

Your difficulties seem to be twofold: one is, that you do not or can not do as much good as you expect or wish, and the other, that the communications are not always reliable.

As to the first, I beg to ask you how do you know that you are not doing good? How do you know that your letter to Mr. Davis, or that to me, have not already done good? How do you know that your experience, in your immediate vicinity, and among your

acquaintance, is not doing good? You can not know any more than I can, when I deliver a lecture or publish something. Perhaps I may hear of some one benefited by my action, and perhaps not. What then? Shall I, because I do not see the good I do, therefore rashly conclude that I do none? Paul may plant and Apollos water, but it is God that gives the increase, and it is often that it is God alone that sees the increase. Now it seems to me (and with this I content myself) that it is enough for me to do all I can—the rest is in the hands of God, and we have hardly a right to demand that it shall be disclosed to us. And if it was, would it not be apt to engender in our minds a feeling of vain-glory, rather than a disinterested desire for the good of our fellow-men? But again; are you yet prepared to go forth on your mission? Have you been to school long enough, and learned enough, to be sure you are right, and that it would be wise for you to go ahead?

Here again I hesitate, for as I progress I find how much there is to learn, and how little I know, and I approach the task of teaching (or doing good) with fear and trembling, lest I may err and teach error instead of truth—may mislead rather than wisely guide. Against this there is but one remedy, and that is patient and persevering industry in my studies, and not venture to teach any thing until after long and carefully weighing it I am satisfied I am right. I can not get all knowledge at once. I must get a little at a time; and it is only as I get one point here and another there, firmly established as true, that I venture to attempt to do any good with it. Any other course renders me liable to the danger of uttering some crudity or some inconsistency that, by-and-by, I may regret; and our New Philosophy has suffered enough from that cause already.

Now the substance of all this is, be patient; the time will come when your mission will be unfolded to you. I waited longer than you have to learn mine, and I passed through such a "slough of despond" as lies in your way; but now I can see right well how all that was preparing me for my task; I think you will find it so with you, for you may rely upon it that no person is gifted as you are in vain. Be patient, then, and abide your time. It will come surely and speedily, unless delayed by unnecessary doubts and despondency. And when it does come, oh! how richly will it repay you!

Your other difficulty, the unreliability of the communications,

involves more considerations than I can find room for in a letter like this. I must content myself with a few general ones.

In the first place, do you not expect too much from the spirits? You seem to expect them to be perfect and unvaryingly accurate in what they say. Can that be expected of any thing but the Almighty? Spirits in that respect are like mortals, they can tell us only what they know and as they know it. They, like us, frequently think they know when they do not, and while they mean to speak truly, from ignorance they err. Is not this natural? nay, is it not inevitable, unless you clothe the spirit with the omniscience which belongs alone to God?

Then as to the future, how do they know any thing about it more than we do? Simply, as I understand it, because they are better able to see the surrounding circumstances than we are, and can therefore form a better judgment as to results. Yet their judgment may err sometimes as well as ours; and here again, unless we clothe them with an attribute of the Deity, we have no right to expect entire accuracy.

But there is another kind of foretelling still, that, namely, which involves their own action. For instance, they say on such a day a thing will happen. By this they mean that on that day they will do that thing. Now, with them as with us, a thousand things may happen to prevent their accomplishing their purpose; they may change their minds about it; circumstances may occur to render it inexpedient or unnecessary, etc. Shall we, therefore, withhold all credit from them?

I tell you that on Monday next A. B. will go to London, and I say so because certain circumstances cause me to believe he will. He has told me so, perhaps, or the like. But he does not go. Am I therefore unworthy of all belief? Again, I tell you that on Monday *I* will go to London, but I alter my mind and do not go, will you condemn me as a falsifier of the truth before you learn the reasons of my change of purpose? The difficulty in all this matter lies in our expecting too much perfection in the spirits, in looking upon them as knowing more than they do, and as being able to do more than they can; in other words, in an erroneous conception of the true nature and character of the spirit-world.

This regards the communications which are intended to be true. There is, however, another class which are intended as deceiving

and to mislead. I have good reason to believe that there is in the spirit-world much opposition to their intercourse with us, and that a combination has been formed to intercept and, if possible, to overthrow it, and one mode of this operation is by visiting circles and individuals, exciting their suspicion of spirits, and bad thoughts as to their good faith and purity of purpose. To one acquainted with the true nature of spirit-life, and not misled by erroneous conceptions of unattainable perfection, this will not appear improbable, for it is precisely what men do in this stage of existence, and what they would be likely to do in that, if influenced by the same feelings. So that between the hasty, uninformed spirits, and those having positive mischievous objects, we are liable constantly to erroneous communications. It is just so in this life. Go out into the streets and ask of the passers-by an account of an affray, and see how many different accounts of it you get. No two will agree. Now, what will you do in such a case? Will you reject them all as being untrue? Will you refuse even to hear another word from those who thus clash in their stories? Or will you set down, like a man of sense, and by the exercise of your reason endeavor to gather the truth from this mass of incongruous matter? Or, in other words, would it have been wise for Franklin because he was knocked over by one of his batteries to have abandoned his researches in electricity?

There are still other considerations not to be overlooked. Our communications are apt to be affected by our own minds, for two reasons—one, because every state of mind has its kindred spirit, and the other, because they can not take complete possession of our mind to the entire exclusion of our own reason and imagination, and the communications, therefore, often come strangely mixed and made up of our thoughts and theirs. Now all these are difficulties and dangers of spiritual intercourse, and what is the remedy? I say, patient perseverance, which day by day will perfect us in the intercourse, make it more distinct and reliable, and more under the control of our reason.

One other topic and I have done. You complain that you do not distinctly remember all that is said and done to you. Mr. Davis explains *how* this is done, and I suppose that *why* it is done is this, in order that they may get an habitual control of your mind, so as to prevent you from mingling your thoughts with theirs, and to

teach you to keep them distinct. I have seen such cases, and have found that self-discipline and aiding the spirits at this self-control soon removed the difficulty.

And now I must close my letter. I have been necessarily very brief on a topic where a great deal may be said—indeed must be, if one is to understand it; but I could not do otherwise, and I only hope that I have aided you. At all times I shall be glad to hear from you.

Truly, yours,

J. W. EDMONDS.

Mr. J. F. LANING.

P.S.—I have just re-read your letter to me, and notice one remark: "I have always insisted on this point, that the spirits should desist from influencing me, unless they were certain of accomplishing some good." Let us illustrate this. You meet a man in the street who says to you, "Mr. L., I will not use that medicine you gave me, unless you are certain that it will do good." Your answer is that of an honest, intelligent man, "I can't be certain, I can only judge it will do good." "Very well," is his reply, "I won't use it," and he leaves you. In a short time he meets a quack, or mere pretender, and asks him for a remedy that he is certain will do good. Either fraudulently, or misled by ignorance or zeal, his new friend says he is certain.

Now see the condition of that man. His state of mind has found a kindred spirit, not in your integrity and intelligence, but in the quack, or pretender. He has left you and gone to an inferior mind, though he is unconscious of the inferiority. Will he by-and-by have a right to complain that he has been deceived by the association he has thus chosen?

In the mean time, you who wanted to aid him and was able to act with wisdom, what has become of you in reference to him? You saw there was no use of your continuing with him, and you went elsewhere in search of those who would appreciate you and not repel you by their unreasonableness. And this would have been prevented by his acting rationally, by reasoning with you on the subject, by earnestly desiring of you knowledge of what your remedy was, and how you expected it would do the good anticipated. In that case you would have kept up the connection with him, and with pleasure have taught him all you knew, until he should have become as wise as yourself, and been prepared to seek

and receive knowledge from those whose knowledge was superior to yours.

Now is not this a fair illustration of your whole case? You can tell better than I can. But as I have gone through this same "slough," it seems to me that I can not do better than give you the clue which led me out of my difficulties.

PHILADELPHIA, August 8, 1853.

MY FRIEND:

Not to weary you do I again take my pen, but to thank you with a heart full of gratitude, which words can not express, for your kind regards to me in your very timely and highly instructive letter, which I have read many times, and I think with lasting instruction to my spirit. You certainly have given me the key to many riddles, which have perplexed my mind so much in my seeking the goal I ever had in view. You have answered all I desired to have answered, except one point, and I will not now ask you to write again, as I see by the length of your letter, how great a tax I was to you. The doubt which comes over my mind is suggested by a remark you make in these words: "I have good reason to believe that there is in the spirit-world much opposition to this intercourse with us, and that a combination has been formed to interrupt and, if possible, to overthrow it, and one mode is, by visiting circles and individuals, exciting their suspicions of spirits, and bad thoughts as to their good faith and purity of purpose." The only indication I have had of such being the case with me, is in the incorrectness of what they have said to me, in answering questions falsely, by whispering in my ears, and presenting to my inward vision symbols which contradicted the facts as they afterward came to my knowledge. Now I do not so much fear that I shall do a serious evil, at the instigation of any spirit, so long as I am governed by principle; but may not such spirits hold out false notions to my mind, in spite of all my entreaties to the contrary? Is there a possibility, with my motives pure, of an evil spirit always keeping so closely *en rapport* with me, as to prevent those whose motives are good from communicating with me and aiding me?

I do not ask the questions to trouble you for a reply now, but should you at any time be at leisure, and feel disposed to answer

me on this point, I think I can then go on my way rejoicing, humbly waiting God's time to come for me to labor.

I have not attended circles as a general thing, and never have I been influenced, except once, in any circle. I spend full six hours nightly and *alone* in my room, and have always conclusive evidence of the presence of spirits. How they are to accomplish any good by me I know not, as by education I am quite ordinary, my time having been mostly employed in an exciting business, in which there is little call for book-learning. I thank you for the encouraging words in your saying, "You may rely upon it that no person is gifted as you are in vain." This idea has always sustained me amid all my doubts, because I believed that such a gift properly cultivated could be brought into requisition, and herein has been my earnest labor to become properly developed for usefulness. And now, my good friend, do not let me trespass on your time for any further reply to me, but just as you feel inclined, thus do. You have already laid me under a debt of gratitude I know not how to repay.

Truly, yours fraternally,

J. F. LAMING.

HON. J. W. EDMONDS.

NEW YORK, *August 5, 1858.*

My dear Sir—Yours of the 3d has just reached me, and I avail myself of a few moments' pause in my business to answer you, simply because it affords me pleasure thus to occupy my leisure, and I might otherwise find it difficult to do my duty as it ought to be done.

Before, however, referring to your question, I want to suggest to you whether your desire to do good may not be in some measure gratified by allowing our correspondence to be published? There are many others in the same situation with yourself, to whom my advice to you may be also valuable, and I should like to bring it to their attention. It can be published without our names if you wish, but it would be better with them, as thus it would have more effect, and besides would encourage others by our example to speak boldly before God and man, the shrinking from which being one of the greatest evils we have to contend with and encounter.

And now as to your queries. "May not evil-disposed spirits

hold out false notions to your mind in spite of all your entreaties to the contrary?" Certainly they may. May not some loafer from your sinks of iniquity approach you and tell you all sorts of lies? May not some abandoned profligate fellow, whose delight is in tormenting others, thrust himself upon your attention and amuse himself by relating to you a farrago of nonsense or blasphemy? Certainly, and what is your remedy? It is twofold—first, to take the measures which the circumstances of the case demand to get rid of him, and second, to weigh what he may say in your judgment, and determine by your reason how far you may rely on or accredit his statements.

It is just so with spiritual intercourse; for, ever bear in mind that many in the spirit-world are even below our level, both intellectually and morally, and they can commune with us just as well as those who are higher.

Then again you ask, "Is there a possibility, with motives pure, of an evil spirit *always* keeping so closely *en rapport* as to prevent those whose motives are good from communicating with and deceiving you?" When you say "*always*," I answer No; but if you should say "*occasionally*," I would answer Yes. And for this reason, would the loafer of whom I have already spoken always seek your society? By no means; he would be uncomfortable in the society of one purer and better than himself, and would soon leave it, and only "*occasionally*" come to answer a special purpose. It would be only as long as he found himself welcome, or until he had fairly tried the experiment whether he might not be welcome, that he would come. There is probably no worse punishment to the evil-disposed than constant association with the pure; and except for some special purpose, we need not fear their society.

But there is another consideration growing out of my experience, and that is, that lower spirits are often allowed to come to us, in order to contribute to their elevation. It is not a week since I had such a case. It was one * * * who hated me, and came to annoy me, and who did so for several days. By dealing with him with good sense and kind feelings, and uninfluenced by any foolish fears that he could injure me, I not only rid myself of the annoyance, but I helped him so, that though he came with all the vindictive feelings which were uppermost in his mind at the moment of his death, he left me, begging me to "remember him only as the humble, peni-

tent, grateful spirit who had by my means been lifted out of the darkness of despair and death." It is only three or four times in all my experience I have been thus visited; and once, at a circle to which I belonged, it was asked, Why inferior spirits did not more frequently come to us as they did to others? and it was answered, "Why does not the loafer from the Five Points seek the society of the judge or the minister?" One thing, however, I have observed in all my intercourse with that class—that I can make them obedient to my will, and compel them to speak the truth to me whenever I command them in the name of God. And still another thing—that I can know them to be inferior, when I find they can not read my mind or answer a mental question.

These are very general propositions in answer to your questions. I can illustrate and enforce them by many other remarks and instances, which the limits of a letter will not allow; but you will find, by reflecting on what I have said, and applying it to your own experience, that I am right, and that these considerations will materially aid you in dealing properly with this new, most interesting, and extraordinary phenomenon.

In the mean time, allow me to make a further suggestion to you, and that is, carefully and laboriously to preserve accurate records of every thing communicated to you. I have done this from the beginning, and I regard my records as invaluable of themselves, while I find that this course has been productive of another good, and that is, that spirits who are aiming at man's advancement, finding that their instructions are not thrown away or confined only to myself, but are preserved so as to do good to others, are more anxious to commune with me, bring others also, and go higher and higher in the character of their teachings; and thus I am able to do good, by giving to the world, at proper times, their beautiful and elevated teachings.

Pray have no hesitation in writing to me at all times. Do you not think that the consciousness derived from your last letter, that I have done you good, amply repays all my labor?

Truly, yours,

J. W. EDMONDS.

Mr. J. F. LAMING.

PHILADELPHIA, *August 9, 1853.*

MY FRIEND :

Your most welcome and unexpected letter of the 5th inst. is at hand.

There is certainly a luxury in doing good, and he who tries it most will partake most largely of its blessings. When I first became satisfied of the reality of spiritual intercourse, my mind was called to this point, which I see impressed you also so strongly, "Of what good can all this be?" I was informed that by yielding myself calmly to its influence I might be enabled to do something for the benefit of my fellow-man. I then made a pledge that upon such conditions only would I humbly seek to render myself useful in this way. I feel how inadequate I am to such a task ; and were it not for a letter I received from a most gifted lady stranger to whom I had written some three or four times, explaining, as best I could, the results of my experience and trials, I should not know that my advice and guidance had assisted any one. In the closing remarks of her last to me, received but a few days ago, are these most cheering words: "This correspondence was necessary to me—I should have died spiritually without it. You have done me immeasurable good, because I stood in a most perilous position, and you helped me in the right direction." Not to appear egotistic do I quote from this lady, but to satisfy you of my motives in allowing my letters to be published over my name, in so distinguished a connection. Therefore, I say, publish just what you please of mine, as in your wisdom you may see best, and if I can in this way awaken one thought of usefulness which shall tell for humanity, I shall be more than paid for the sacrifice of feeling it costs me to have my name appear in print.

I know but in part what spiritualism has done for you, my friend, but for me it has done a blessed work. For twenty long years was the subject of religion a most inexplicable mystery to me—my mind never could be fully persuaded, and often did I wish I had never been born. It will not do for others to say of me, I was not honest while thus seeking. My attention to the religious services of the Church, to the study of the Bible, only tell me how anxious my heart was, as it longed for the blessings I supposed were to be found in them. I have now no more misgivings on this point. I am free, and oh! what a freedom it is! Shall I then hesitate to lend

my humble efforts to so ennobling a cause? True, they may not influence the learned, yet the unlearned perhaps may read the little I have said to you, and who can tell but your replies may in such connection be better understood and more wisely appreciated by the honest seekers of the light, the truth, and the way?

Yours, truly,

J. F. LANING.

HON. J. W. EDMONDS, NEW YORK.

Appendix—C.

HISTORY OF AN UNDEVELOPED SPIRIT.

ONE HUNDREDTH INTERVIEW.

NEW YORK, *July 12th, 1852.*

LAST evening (having the day before returned from Albany) I attended the circle at Mr. A.'s house, where Mrs. S. was the medium.

I began by reading the by-laws and the prayer. As we had no minutes of the last meeting, I proposed to read some of my papers that I had taken with me. I began to do so, when I was interrupted by some vehement manifestations on the part of Mrs. S. She was violently and roughly affected, and we knew not what to make of it.

Mr. S. explained by saying, that the evening before his brother, who is a disbeliever in this intercourse, and doubted the existence of a God, was at his house on a visit, and Mr. S., anxious to do him good, had solicited him to sit down and have a communication through Mrs. S. He said he was sorry he had done so, and was afraid he had done wrong, for she was taken possession of by a spirit who had been very violent in his manner, who had been rude and boisterous in his deportment, and had manifested a fiend-like spirit of defiance. Being requested in the name of God to leave the medium, he had done so, but with a wail of agony and disappointment; and she had been ever since in an unhappy state of mind, and had come to the circle in the hope of being relieved from the depressing influence.

Instead, however, of being relieved, she was taken possession of by him as violently as ever, and it was melancholy to see how she was exercised by him.

The first words she spoke under his influence were, "You must all pray for me."

We knew not who he was, nor what his condition and his wants, and we were therefore silent.

In a little while he said, in a stern and boisterous manner, "Won't you pray for me?"

Again we continued silent, for we were surprised, and knew not what to do.

In a short time we engaged somewhat in conversation with him; but as I did not record the conversation—being too much occupied with the novelty of the phenomenon to do so—I can only give a general idea of its purport.

He manifested a very unhappy frame of mind, sometimes setting us at defiance, and at others acting as if he hated us.

At one time he said, "Well, I don't care for your prayers; I don't want them."

I remonstrated with him on his rudeness, and his reply intimated that he would not alter it.

I told him that we had a will, too, as well as him, and if he put us to exercising it, it perhaps might interfere with him some.

He looked at me with an air of defiance, as if he wanted to strike me, but seeing that I was very cool, and rather compassionate than otherwise, the expression of his countenance changed to a look of inquiry, as if he was looking to see whether I was speaking in any temper. He was apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, for he said:

"I don't want to hurt your woman—I only want to frighten her; and I should like to frighten you, too, if I could."

"Well," said I, "suppose you try it on me, and see how you come out."

I then said, "If you will be gentle and quiet, we will pray for you." He became so, and I then gave utterance to this prayer:

"Almighty and most merciful Father, who has created us in thy wisdom and sustained us by thy love, look down with compassion on this, thy unhappy child now present, and assist him, we beseech thee, in his search after thy truth. Roll from his mind the clouds

of error, ignorance, and superstition, that the light of thy wisdom may shine upon him, cheering his heart, enlightening his understanding, and rendering bright his pathway to thy holy mansions eternal in the heavens. Suffer thy holy spirits to minister unto him as his guardians and guides, to lead him from darkness to light, and place him on the plane of everlasting progression."

[Here he threw himself on his knees in the center of our circle, and lifted his hands in the attitude of prayer. I continued:]

"Drive far from him the darkness of his own errors, and the mischiefs of his evil imaginings, and endue him with wisdom to receive and know thy truth. Teach him to seek knowledge with a single eye to his advancement and thy glory, and defend him from all false doctrine. Enable him to know and to feel thy love, and that through thy ministering spirits it is shielding him by day, and watching over him by night."

When the prayer was completed he arose from his knees, and on resuming his seat, in a tone indicating a feeling of uneasiness and desperation, he made some remark about his unhappiness. I did not record the precise words, but I remember the purport was, that he saw no prospect of a termination to his unhappy condition, nor how to remedy it.

I suggested to him that if I should read to him some of my papers it might aid him. He said, "I'd rather you'd talk to me."

I answered, "Well, I will, in the language I have here written down."

He intimated his willingness to listen, and I read my papers containing the allegories of the transit from physical to mental light, and from mental to spiritual light, and that on the nature of the laws, human, divine, and semi-divine.

He listened with a good deal of patience. The papers had an evident effect to calm him. Occasionally, however, he interrupted me, sometimes by getting up and giving me a look of defiance, sometimes a look of searching inquiry, and sometimes by asking me, "Is that true, now?" That question was asked several times, and only when I was reading something about the ultimate redemption of the soul, through the love and mercy of God.

Mrs. S. said afterward that he frequently spoke, as it were, to him-

self: "What does this mean?"—"That's a lie!"—"By thunder!" etc. And while reading of the happiness of the brighter spheres, he exclaimed, "And, oh! can I ever get there?"

After I had got through reading, and he had become evidently much calmed, I said to him: "Now, my friend, we have given you most of our evening; will you not leave us, that we may converse with the friends we came here to meet? We will willingly converse with you at another time, after you have thought upon what we have said to you to-night."

He looked searchingly into my face, as if to see whether I was in earnest. I said, "I intend to act in good faith with you. I will converse with you at any time, if I can only do you any good." He said, "Will you talk to me in your own house?"

I answered, "Yes, or here at our next meeting, or at Mrs. Fish's, through the rappings."

He said, "But I don't know how to rap."

I replied, "You will easily learn, and you will find plenty to teach you; so I will meet you there some day this week."

He said, "Will you ask for me?"

I answered, "Yes."

He said, "Agreed."

"But," said I, "who shall I inquire for—what's your name?"

He looked very suspiciously at me, as if his doubts of me were all awakened again, and so I said, "Never mind, I suppose I shall find you by asking for the one who was here to-night."

He then said, "Ask for the man who was drowned in the canal three weeks ago."

I said, "Very well, I will not forget; and now pray leave us, for you see how much distress you have caused to the medium."

He then turned to Mr. S. and said, "I don't want to tear your woman to pieces—I don't want to hurt her. I lied to you last night."

Mr. S. said, "Well, never mind, that need not trouble you, for I forgive you for that."

"Will you?" exclaimed he; "well, you are a good fellow, you are, and (at the same time shaking Mr. S. heartily by the hand) I will leave."

He then left her, but not until he had thrown her upon the floor in great distress. From that, however, she was soon relieved, and resumed her seat. I asked if he had left. The answer through

Mrs. W. was, "He still lingers here." And I said, "He need not fear; I will keep my word with him, and have an interview during the week." And he then left.

I have spoken of the spirit thus far as if he was a man personally present and visible to us.

Of course it will be understood that I mean to speak of him only as he manifested himself through the medium. He seemed to have obtained entire possession of her, compelling her to do and to say things which she would gladly have avoided. She was very much distressed by the whole thing, frequently wept bitterly, and resisted as far as she was able.

After that spirit had left, Mrs. S. became more calm, and was impressed we should sing,

"Before Jehovah's awful throne,"

which we did. We asked the good spirits who usually attend our circle to commune with us, and not let us feel that we were abandoned to such unhappy influences.

They soon manifested themselves, and with a calmness and gentleness strikingly in contrast with the violence before exhibited.

The first words she now said were:

"Wisdom ruleth all things."

And then she repeated the following lines, given to her on a former occasion:

"His power how great, his love how vast,
His wisdom how intense!
He holds the nations in his hand,
And watches o'er the vast expanse."

We inquired who was speaking to us, and we learned that Washington and Franklin were present, and that it was William Penn who spoke, and the manner and language were most gentle and grateful to us.

I remarked that I supposed the visitation of that unhappy spirit had been permitted for some good end?

The answer was, "Yes; and love and kindness will accomplish much, where uncharitable minds and feelings will only create more discord than harmony.

"Ye have all perceived this evening, and the medium has most severely felt, the discord and unhappy influence which a poor, unpro-

gressed, and unloved spirit has brought into thy circle—unloved, because of an unlovely sphere surrounding him, which repelled those who wished to approach near and take him by the hand, and lead him where his troubled soul and wandering spirit would find rest ; and let it teach you all a lesson of humility, love, and forbearance.

“When the wisdom of God permits a poor spirit to enter thy circle for the purpose of information, of obtaining light, do not stand aloof, feeling holier, more favored, more exalted than him ; but thank thy God, in thy inmost heart, that thou hast been favored to partake of his dearest love, to know his truth, and to feel how vast, how high, how much and thankfully to be prized are the privileges which you enjoy, who yet inhabit this covering of flesh !

“Mysterious are the ways of Providence in his workings on the minds of men. Beautiful is his wisdom in the unfolding of his will, in the power of his might, in the strength of his love, in his long-suffering, his mercy, and forbearance, even to those who turn their backs and shut their eyes to the light which comes in heavenly streams, always felt and tasted by mortals, who live by his command, who exist by his power, and yet who are blind to that holy power which overshadows us with the brightness of his glory.”

I inquired if it was in their power to have prevented the visitation we had had ?

It was answered : “It was beyond our power to prevent it. Beyond any power but the Power of powers. It was permitted in order to teach you a lesson and to aid him.

“That poor spirit lately left the body, and was wandering around in darkness and chaos. He was drawn toward a certain spot by a certain unbelieving man—a man who needs to be convinced there is a God—a man whose mind, when rightly led, will be capable of leading many others to seek the light of truth. He was followed by this spirit, and with him approached this medium. He was anxious to converse, no matter how or by what means his object might be gained. The other spirits who wished to commune obeyed the will of God, and stepped aside.

“That spirit overshadowed the weaker one, but not to harm her. Oh, no ; God will not permit harm to befall the instruments he has chosen to do his work ! And for that poor spirit have charity, sweet charity.

“He came, and even told a falsehood, so great was his desire to

talk, and he startled the persons present by the violence of his actions and the rudeness of his language. But one good object was gained, though then unseen. Curiosity was aroused, and an intense desire to know more, which will lead yet to flowers, and bring forth fruit to gladden thy brotherly heart."

I inquired if we had dealt rightly with him?

"Yes, as far as you know, in your sincere desire to do right, but you could not see the effect. God in his wisdom could, but you can not behold the mysterious workings of his superintending and almighty ruling power. That poor spirit left its poor body after causing much agony of mind and body to others, and hovered around the earth he had left, till through the kindness of God he was permitted to approach thy circle. Then why not through your kindness permit him to enter the path of knowledge which he yet must tread, but which, without aid, long time must elapse before he can tread?

"He was permitted to come for instruction from mortals, who could instruct him in a manner more acceptable unto him than could spirits who could not approach him near enough to do so. Will you not, then, bear with him? He is just as heaven-born as you are; his destiny is just as high and holy; and without aid, he must go down and labor hard, and climb long before he can reach the plane of progression on which ye stand, highly-favored friends. Not that thou art more worthy, but thy lot has been cast in a sphere whose close surroundings have enveloped thy footsteps, have led thee on to see this high and holy light, which is coming surely on, brightly, magnificently to the hearts of men, and to those first who are willing to receive it.

"Do thy duty, then, to God. And this is thy duty: to help a spirit, whether in or out of the flesh, and spread the influence of the light on all around.

"And, oh, that poor spirit has left thee humbled—yes, humbled. Charity and forbearance, my friend, have done it. God gave thee such gifts from heaven. Hide them not. Let them shine, and thou shalt be made happier and stronger as thou shalt cultivate those lovely gifts of Heaven. You saw what an effect the word forgiveness had on that poor spirit. Never shrink from duty, no matter how unpleasant; for far more bright becomes the way where willing hearts begin the work, and far more bright becomes the ray of light, and love, and truth, and hope.

"When that poor spirit comes again, make thy words simple to him, as if talking to a child. Kindly use him. Oh! tell him of a Father's love, and of bright spirits who have left the earth and dwell in glory now, and who though happy, would love to come and teach him. They will gladly take him by the hand, and lead him to green pastures, where peace and love will gently lead him on to where his poor spirit may find rest. He has as yet only caught a faint glimpse, only heard a faint echo, and only here now, my friend, conceived, or thought he conceived, of a happier life to be obtained from learning the first rudiments of the school which he is now but beginning to enter.

"Happy, happy, happy privilege that you enjoy of communing with spirits, and leading them, as ye have yourselves been led, to a knowledge of the love and mercy of God!"

It will be remembered that Mr. S. had said in the beginning of the evening that he was afraid he had done wrong, and was sorry he had been instrumental in introducing that spirit, and thus causing his wife so much distress and unhappiness. Now, before the interview ended, the spirits turned toward him and said, "No, Gilbert, you did right; you acted from pure motives to do good to your brother, and good will come out of it, both to him and to that unhappy spirit."

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH INTERVIEW.

August 9, 1852.—The circle met last evening under its new organization, as the "Circle of Hope."

After some preliminary matters, we with one accord asked for the spirit who said that he was the one who had been drowned in the canal, and, after a little while, but with much less violence, he came.

He assumed a rough, devil-may-care sort of manner, and said, in a coarse tone, "You think you are too good to speak to me."

We replied to him, "No; we wanted to speak to him, if we could do him any good, and for that purpose we had inquired for him and kept our promise."

"Yes, we had, and he would't lie to us any more, but they lied so to him all round where he was."

I then remarked to Mrs. S. (the medium), that I hoped she would give utterance to every word he desired to say.

"Why, you would't like to hear all I would say, would you?"

"Certainly I would, if we are to administer to your disease."

"I have no disease, my fine old gentleman, neither of mind or body."

Mrs. W. remarked something about his not having a body now.

"Hav'nt I?" was the answer. "Well, anyhow, I think I have."

Mrs. W. then asked him if he had a mother, and whether she was living or dead? and for some time she kept his attention on his mother.

He answered, at first roughly, "Yes he had one, but she was dead." Then he seemed overcome with emotion at thinking of her; said she was his best friend. Then, as if ashamed of his feelings (for he had shed tears), he suddenly threw aside the signs of emotion, and in a rough tone said he was a man, not a baby.

Mrs. W. inquired of him about his father.

"Damned old fool," was the reply. "He is the cause of my being here."

I then asked him if he had seen his mother in the spirit-world?

"What! down there in that dark and dismal place? No, she was a good woman wherever she is—in heaven or hell. But she is not in hell; I know she ain't. Don't talk about her; don't speak of her to me."

"Why not, if she was your best friend? She has still as much love for you as ever."

He again was shaken with emotion, and cried, "Oh, my mother! my dear mother! She did love her villain son, and I was very—very wicked."

I asked him if he did not wish to join his mother wherever she was?

He answered, "Do you think I am a fool?"

I replied, "I don't know how that is, I am not yet well enough acquainted with you to tell."

"Well, I am not satisfied by a great deal where I am now." And then, after a pause, he exclaimed, "Oh! where shall I go? What shall I do? Oh! save me! save me!"

I answered, that if he would allow me I would read him a little story that might enlighten him some.

"What does that mean? Don't use big words to me. If you want me to understand you, talk plain, so that I can understand."

"Well, excuse me, I will try to do so. You recollect the stories I read to you when you came before?"

"Yes, and I understood them too, most all. I liked them."

"Then I will read you one now that will help to tell you where to go and what to do. And as I read, if there is any thing you do not understand, I want you to speak out, and I will explain it to you."

I then read as follows: "I was a wanderer."

He interrupted me. "So am I; I wander all the time; I have no place of rest."

I resumed. "I was a wanderer, and before me was a vast tract of land with a broken and uneven surface, in which were many deep chasms, that is, deep holes and dark places."

He again spoke: "There are plenty of them where I am."

I again resumed: "In my wanderings, I was in constant fear of falling."

"I did fall," he cried; "many and many a time I've fallen."

I resumed my reading: "and I was often on the very brink of destruction. Still I was upheld and conducted in safety, though dangers beset me on every side; I thought to myself, Is there no end to these dangers—no rest? Is my whole life to be spent in this incessant toil and watchfulness? A high wall was before me. I followed a path by its side, hoping to find an entrance within the inclosure. After much toil I came to a gate; it was of great beauty, sparkling with gems and precious stones."

Here he interrupted me by saying, "Oh! I can't go in there!"

I replied: "Wait a moment, my friend, perhaps we can find an entrance."

I read on: "The pillars which sustained this gate were imbedded deep into the earth, and towered high in the heavens."

"Towered? What does that mean?"

"Running up high, like a liberty pole."

"They were beautifully white and semi-transparent—that is, you could partly see through them. An arch was overhead."

"An arch? What is that?"

"The circular top of a door or gateway." "An arch was overhead, from which flashed the words, in brilliant light—**HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**"

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "I can't enter there—I can't enter there."

"The gate was open a little distance, as if to admit any one who was inclined to enter. Here, thinks I, is my rest from all my toil

and wandering. Here I will enter and be at peace. As I was entering, the gate came gently to, and forced me from the entrance. My unfitness to enter the gate of holiness did not occur to me. I thought, if I can obtain an entrance, I will, for within it was beautiful and inviting. So I walked in front of the gate, as if unconcerned at the opposition I had met with, and watching for an opportunity to dart through suddenly. Soon all was in readiness, and, as I was near the gate, I started with all the speed I could command, but before I could gain an inch within the inclosure the gate was closed, and I lay on the ground bruised and in pain. I thought, if I ever enter it must be by some other gate, where one can enter who is not so holy. I asked myself, Did any one ever enter this gate? A voice at my side answered, 'Yes, one, and only one: He who died, the just for the unjust, that he might open the gate of Repentance.' The gate of Repentance, thinks I, where will I find it? The voice answered, 'Pass on.' So I again followed the path by the side of the wall till I was weary, and lay me down to rest. Again a voice at my side said, 'Up, sluggard! and flee for thy life.'

He had been quite still and attentive for some time, but here he broke in with the inquiry, "Sluggard? What's that?"

"Lazy, idle, sleepy fellow."

"I arose, and a gate was before me, but, oh! how different from the beautiful one I had passed! Two massive columns of coarse granite supported a frame on which were perpendicular sliding bars. The whole appeared to be made more for strength than beauty. Thinks I, Is this one of the gates of heaven? The voice answered,

"Many will seek to enter in, but will not be able."

"In examining the gate more attentively, I saw an inscription over it in letters of black: 'REPENTANCE.' I also saw that there was space enough between the bars to admit those who wished to enter. 'Here,' I exclaimed, 'is no barrier!'"

"Barrier!" he said, "what's that?"

"Something to stop you from going in."

"Here is no barrier, and all can enter.' The voice repeated, 'All can enter; but enter ere it be too late.'"

Here he inquired with a look and tone of great earnestness, "Am I not too late?"

"Listen, and judge for yourself."

"So I thought to myself, I will enter; and I approached the gate to pass between the bars; they came sliding together, and completely checked my progress. As I passed along to the opening caused by the sliding of the bars, the bars passed with me, and I soon became convinced that something must be done before I could enter even so lowly a gate as this. To return was destruction—to advance seemed impossible. 'How shall I be saved?' escaped from my lips. A hand was beside me, bleeding from the palm, with a finger pointing to the inscription. I asked, 'Of what shall I repent?' The answer was, 'You have not obeyed the commands of your Maker.' 'What does he require of me?' 'Obedience to the law of kindness and love. Instruct the ignorant, relieve the needy, soothe the afflicted, and bind up the broken-hearted.'"

Here he said, as if to himself, "I never did any of that."

"Then, I thought, to what purpose have I lived? And there was none to bless me, no, not one.

"Then I said, 'O Lord! I abhor myself, and there is no good thing in me.' I looked at the gates, and the bars were again in their place, and there were many openings through which I could pass. I took courage and advanced, though with fear and trembling. As I passed the upper part of my body through an opening, I was caught by the bars, and held firmly in that position. The bars came together above and below me, and fitted tightly to my body, so that I could neither pass out nor in. I put up a cry for help. Soon a shining one came near. He was the picture of benevolence and love. He pointed to the inscription and said, 'Repent and cry for mercy.' I told him I had repented and cried."

Here this poor spirit interrupted my reading and said, "I hav'nt cried often."

I resumed—"He smiled and said, 'Surely you are not in earnest with so feeble a cry?' I was every moment becoming more and more uncomfortable and alarmed, as I could neither advance nor retreat."

Here he again interrupted me, "Retreat, go back! Go again away down there where all is so dark and gloomy—oh! no! no! no. Have pity on me—show me how I may go on."

I again resumed, deeming the vision the best answer to what he said.

"And the chasms in my rear seemed to have advanced to my feet. I was now really convinced that my present and future happiness,

and, in fact, my life, depended upon my passage through this gate. So I set up a more earnest cry, 'O Lord! save me, or I perish.' It seemed now that the bars held me tighter than before. At this I became so alarmed, that I struggled with all my might. I exerted my whole strength, as for my life, and to my surprise the barrier disappeared, and I seemed to have struggled only with myself, against my own unwillingness to enter. To me the gate had disappeared, and in the place of the humble structure—"

"Structure! That means building, don't it?"

"Yes."

"And in place of the humble structure, I now beheld a triumphant and glorious arch, more beautiful than the gates of holiness. I thought much of the change, and I now perceived that it was owing to the different position in which I was placed. Over the arch was this beautiful inscription :

" ' PRAISE TO THE REDEEMER. ' "

"On turning my eyes within the wall, what raptures did I behold! A country, as far as the eye could reach, more beautiful than imagination could paint, inhabited by thousands and thousands of spirits, whose employment was to increase the happiness of each other, studying the mysteries of redeeming love, and progressing to the New Jerusalem, which can be entered only by spirits made perfect."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, in an under-tone, "I can never be perfect."

As I continued reading the foregoing, he gradually became more humble and respectful, his tones were softer, his manner more gentle, and when I closed, he paused long, and then in a voice of deep contrition said :

"I am a poor, ignorant, undeveloped spirit. But it is not my fault. I do need help very much. God help me—God help me! Oh, do, good friends, pray for me. I was no boatman. I told you a lie. I will never lie again. I try, and try, and try, but they keep pulling me back, and lie to me. God bless my mother. She loved her son. I want to go to her; but do you think that such a poor, God-forsaken spirit could talk to my mother?"

These sentences were spoken in broken fragments, and amid intense agony, and when he was answered, that his mother, if a bright spirit in heaven, yet loved him dearly, and would rejoice to meet him

again, he exclaimed, with hands clasped, eyes uplifted, and voice tremulous and soft from the depth of his emotion, "Mother! mother! mother! God bless you, wherever you are. Will you look down? Oh, no, that is out of the question—I am away down—down there where she can not come."

We endeavored to reassure him by telling him the mercy of God was infinite, that His forgiveness was ever for those who earnestly sought it, that his mother could approach him if he earnestly desired, and that he and we were surrounded by good spirits who were ready to take him by the hand and help him, and that they were kept from him only by himself.

He answered, "My mother is interested in me wherever she is. I know she is. Just see how many such shining people you draw about you—they are looking at me—they are looking at me!"

He said this with his head elevated, and his eyes intently gazing on what seemed to us to be vacancy. He was then sitting in our circle by my side. Suddenly he drew back with his chair some distance from the circle, his head sunk upon his breast, and in tones of deep humility he said, "I am not fit to be there."

We said to him, "Nay, good friend, draw not back from among us. Take your place in our midst as our equal. We are erring as you are, and need forgiveness as you do. Come, then, and again be one of us."

"You err, too?" he cried. "Do you confess as much?"

"Alas! who among us can be perfect? We need the aid of good spirits as you do."

He cried, "I can't stand the thought. I can't get through that gate! To return, is to go away down there, where it is so dark, so dreadfully dark! But I don't want to go back. Oh, dear, if these shining ones would come near me!"

Then with a voice tremulous with emotion, as with hands and eyes uplifted, he cried, "Oh, for God's sake! come! come! come! For God's sake! save me! save me! Oh, yes, I am indeed a wretch! I am sorry for what I have said and done. I have been very wicked. Oh, forgive me, forgive me! Tell God, will you, some of you, that I am sorry? But no, no, they can't come near me. I am all black, as blackness itself. Oh, mother! mother! for God's sake, look on me! Oh, no, no, I am too bad."

Then pausing and looking intently upon vacancy, as if he saw

some one standing near, he suddenly cried out, "What did you say, that you would lead me to my mother? Oh, God forgive me! wretched, wretched, wretched sinner that I am! I know that he is all-powerful to save! I felt that away down in the darkness where I dwelt. I have heard that he was merciful, and will he be merciful to me a sinner? Oh, mother, you ask them to come near me. They say that mother is there. Hark! They offer to take me by the hand, and tell me I need not go back there to that dreadful darkness. Will you take me? I want to go with you."

Then putting his hand on his heart, as if in great distress, he said, "But, oh, that ugly feeling—it will come back, and how can I help it?"

Turning to us with an imploring look, shuddering, as if afraid to look behind him, and pointing over his shoulder, he said, "There are black spirits there who want to take me back. Won't you keep them away? Hark! Again a spirit has spoken—'Brother, reach us forth your hand.'"

He paused, and with a countenance becoming more cheerful, and a manner more gentle, he knelt in our midst, and reached forth his hand hesitatingly, tremblingly, as if afraid it would not be taken. Then bowing his head upon his breast, and sinking almost to the floor, he whispered in a voice scarcely audible, "God is merciful—God is merciful." Then raising his head, he started suddenly, and gazing intently cried, "Oh, that light! that light! that light! It is so bright, so cool, so pleasant! I don't want ever to go back! Do you think they will let me go back? God help me! I saw a star there! Oh, how beautiful it is! The light is coming all around me, and that shining one is coming nearer! Oh, I don't want to go back! God help me! I do repent; I'm sorry for all the wickedness I have ever done—I'm sorry. If repentance means sorry, don't let me go back. Oh, those bright ones are all around me! They say my mother is behind that beautiful star. But (shuddering and recoiling as from something behind him) there is an ugly black thing behind me drawing me back! Don't you see them? I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Tell God I'm sorry. Tell my mother to come. The black spirits are trying to draw me back, but the light comes all around me. Yet, oh, that ugly feeling at my breast! They say they will come and take me (alluding, as we understood, to the dark spirits). Oh, God be merciful to me a sinner! Now they are a

good deal farther off. Don't you see them? Don't let them come. Oh, God, be merciful, be merciful to me a sinner."

These things, as I have attempted to record them, were broken sentences, uttered at different times, and with ever-varying emotions. It is impossible to describe the fear and despair that sometimes possessed him, the deep humility of his confession of his sins, and the ecstatic joy with which he hailed the approach of the good spirits, the appearance of that star, and the shining of the bright light around him.

At length the violence of these contending emotions fairly overcame him, and he sank prostrate on the floor.

While thus prostrate, we sang the hymn—

"There is a happy land, far, far away."

At length he arose, and in a voice so gentle and humble he said, "Oh, I feel so much relieved! I entered here feeling the torments of the damned. I'll never use that word again. But now how pleasant the feeling; and the light that shines around me, how bright and beautiful it is! God bless you. God bless you all.

"They tell me when I leave this poor woman I shall go up with them. I am sorry I have given her so much trouble; but she has helped me—oh how much—and they say goodness is always rewarded. You have all helped me. God bless you all. When I leave her now, I will never trouble her more. Now I am going; close around, and sing that happy song."

We did so, and when we finished, in a faint and feeble voice he said, "Oh, how beautiful is all around me! I feel so happy now I am going. Ask God to take me now."

Then after a little pause he added, as his voice faded gently away, "Hark! that beautiful music—music—music! Farewell!"

And so he left us, rewarding us for all we had done for him by the full assurance his fate has given us, that indeed, indeed our Redeemer liveth!

After he left, we asked for some of the brighter spirits to come, if only for a brief period, in order to relieve and cheer our medium.

ELIAS HICKS came, and said:

"My dear friends, I have only to say to you this evening, that you have done your duty to God, to the spirits, and to man, in this instance, and you shall see before long time shall elapse that you

shall reap benefit from the charity and good-will to the poor, which ye have shown to the poor spirit who was in your midst to-night. God will bless you, richly bless you in your efforts to do right, and may you ever be found willing to walk in the path of duty, if you should see and know that thorns are in that path as well as duty. Ye can not now see with your mortal eyes the good you have rendered that spirit; ye have sent him away rejoicing in the knowledge that his Redeemer liveth; ye have introduced him from behind a wall of darkness into a field of light. How pure and beautiful it comes on his hitherto blinded vision!

"His heart, weighed down with doubts and sorrow and uncertainty, is now drinking in light which comes from spirits in an atmosphere of light. It will yet approach him so clearly as to lead him into the path where he can gain light to progress in the way that leads to eternal life high in the heavens.

"It may seem like a new phase to you, but the same has been done ere this. Spirits have been helped on their way by mortals, and been able to progress more rapidly in this way than if they had been without such aid. It is a new field of thought and study to you all, and you will yet see benefits now unknown to you. Oh, yes! that light will gently lead to the light that makes perfect day.

"As little children, ye are just beginning to learn the ways of wisdom and beauty and knowledge, which God has vouchsafed to mortals in this day and age. Let those sneer who may. Ye, my friends, look steadily forward to the end in view. I mean progression—the glorious wisdom that is being unfolded to you now. Not in one, or ten, or even twenty ways alone will the will of God be made manifest!

"With grateful hearts think of this, and be ever ready to do as God would have you do to your fellow-men, that the world may see how bright is the light that has led you to know this mystery of mysteries."

Here the interview ended, leaving behind it to us an invaluable lesson, for which we can not be too grateful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Appendix—f.

It is suggested to me that I ought to be more specific in detailing the manner in which I receive the communications which are given through me. I am not certain that I can do that in a manner at all satisfactory, for the simple reason that I do not well understand it myself. I have watched and scrutinized the operation very closely, but I am not sure that I fully comprehend it yet. I will, however, explain it as far as I can.

It must be recollected that this is not peculiar to me, but the same faculty is possessed by others. The annexed letters from Mr. Wolcott, explaining the frontispiece, and the case of Mr. Hurlbut, of Auburn, whose visions were published in the "SHEKINAH," are similar instances; and I know of several others. Among some of them, it may be that we may yet get a description of the operation better than any thing I can say.

In the first place, then, I remark, that the idea is impressed upon the mind in the same manner, and with equal, if not greater vividness than any thing presented to the mind through the physical organs of sight. But how that is done is another question.

When I receive them, I am not in a trance state at all, but just as much in the full possession of all my faculties as ever I am. I sometimes, when I perceive or am told that I am to be influenced, bind a handkerchief around my eyes, to exclude external objects, but not always, for I sometimes see them with my eyes open to the full impression of external objects. But though the physical sight is thus closed, all the senses are as much in full play as ever. I detail to the bystanders what is passing before my view, as I would any object in the street which attracted my attention. I converse on that or other topics, get up and move about, preserving throughout it all the distinct vision before my mind's eye. I have tried experiments with it, and once, while one of the party was writing down what I told him I saw, I took out of my pocket an apple and

ate it, and conversed with others present on other subjects, and resumed the thread of my narrative with my amanuensis as soon as he was ready for me. I have interrupted the visions by attending to some business, and then resumed them instantly that I again gave my mind to them. I have reasoned upon them with others as they passed, and asked and received explanations. But I can not do more than repeat that the effect produced on my mind is precisely that created by external material objects seen by my physical organs of sight. So much so, that unless I look out pretty sharp, I do not observe any difference. So, when I have had some object thus presented to me, when my mind was occupied with something else, and I have not stopped to discriminate, it has seemed to me as if I had actually seen the object with my eyes. A moment's examination, however, told me I had not, and I could from this well understand how those who had not been in the habit of studying the operations of their own minds could be deceived as to the manner in which they got the sight, which they were cognizant of. The difference, however, is very marked when closely studied. I once saw the spirit of one whom I had known, sitting near me. He was just as perceptible to me as was the gentleman in mortal form who sat at my left hand, conversing with me. I looked repeatedly from one to the other, to see if there was any difference in the manner in which their presence was conveyed to my mind, but could recognize none; yet I knew that I did not see the spirit with my physical eyes, because with them I saw distinctly the material objects on which he was seated, not as through a transparent medium, but as if there was nothing between those objects and my eyes.

This has been a matter of a good deal of curious speculation with me, and I have tried to understand it; but it is not easy for one who has been in the habit of depending on the sight alone for objects of vision, to comprehend how that vision can be the same by any other means. But so it is, and I have examined it and tried all sorts of experiments with it too often, not to know by this time the reality of this thing.

It will not do for any one to say that it is my imagination that is misleading me. I have been too much in the habit of self-discipline, and have too much the control of my own mind, not to know better. In Reid "On the Mind," that philosopher says, "If we attend duly to the operation of our mind in the use of this faculty (seeing),

we shall perceive that the visible appearance of objects is hardly ever regarded by us. It is not at all made an object of thought or reflection, *but serves only as a sign to introduce to the mind something else, which may be distinctly conceived by those who never saw.*" Hence he insists that "sight discovers almost nothing which the blind may not comprehend." And he adds, "we conceive inspiration to give a man no new faculty, but to communicate to him in a new way, and by extraordinary means, what the faculties common to mankind can apprehend, and what he can communicate to others by ordinary means." Now is not this the solution of this matter? It seems to me that it is, with this single exception, that the "means" which, when he wrote, nearly a hundred years ago, were regarded as "extraordinary," are now becoming more common and ordinary. Be this as it may, it is worth thinking of, especially as the fact is here exemplified in the case of many others besides myself. It is therefore really to be hoped that the matter may receive the attention of some one more capable than I am of investigating it, unless, perchance, it ought to be referred to opium—a solution, I perceive, very much in favor with those who know as little of the whole subject as a horse does of the Heidelberg Catechism. It makes a good deal of difference, whether the obscurity which haunts us is owing to a spot on the sun or a cloud that surrounds the beholder.

But to resume my subject. There are, I perceive, when I closely scrutinize, three different modes in which I receive the ideas communicated to me. One, where they are presented to me merely as pictures, producing on my mind the same effect as looking on a painting; another, where they are presented as if a living, acting reality, producing the same effect as the moving, existing material world that surrounds me; and the third, where a train of thought is thrust upon my mind, consecutive and clear in its order and connection, producing the same effect as any process of reasoning by which I arrive at a conclusion.

The following letters from Mr. Wolcott speak of the first two species, and show that he possesses the same faculty that I do, though happily he possesses one that I do not, namely, that of preserving and delineating what he sees. The third kind is exemplified in Section Forty-nine of the foregoing work. There the thoughts were given to me as rapidly as I could utter them, and far more so than the Doctor could write them down, and I know they were not

of my own concocting, for they conveyed to me ideas which were entirely novel to me.

These remarks, with the following letters from Mr. Wolcott, are all that can be necessary on this subject.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CONCORD, N. H., Aug. 10th, 1853.

Dear Sir—Please excuse the liberty of a letter from one who is an entire stranger to you, without the formality of an introduction. I trust the nature of the subject will be sufficient apology. I have been reading with deep interest your letter on the "*Spiritual Manifestations*," and can not but rejoice that a person occupying so high a position in society has so ably, boldly, and triumphantly vindicated the claims of this phenomenon against the "small shot" of little editors, less lawyers and politicians, and diminutive clergymen, who can not or will not investigate the facts. My state of mind was similar to your own before I examined this subject, viz., a very strong doubt or total disbelief in the doctrine of man's future immortal state. All the evidence I sought on the subject tended only to confirm my doubts. A little over two years ago, by invitation, I attended a sitting which affected me considerably for a time; but subsequent meetings were so unsatisfactory, and reports were so contradictory, that I threw the whole matter aside as a barefaced imposture, and spared no words in denouncing the whole affair a stupendous fraud on the weak-minded and credulous. Last March, one evening, at a party in this place, a sitting was held, in which I joined, supposing it to be merely in sport. We had not sat five minutes before my skepticism was dumbfounded. I arose overwhelmed with shame and confusion, determined to test the matter fully. I tried many experiments of my own invention, but always with a satisfactory result. I soon became convinced that some intelligent agent with a will of its own, independent of all persons present, was the cause of the demonstrations. I was more surprised at these results in this place, where the people have little more spirituality than New Hampshire granite. Becoming more and more interested, I desired to witness some of the higher "*manifestations*." An opportunity soon occurred in Boston, during the month of June. At the first sitting I was presented with a view of a picture of singular beauty and composition. The impression it made upon my

mind was so strong that I obtained a canvas and painted it. Some of the party, on seeing it, so much admired it, that I resolved to reproduce it on a larger scale. During various sittings, particular directions were given for improving certain parts and altering others, which instructions I followed implicitly, and with a result which astonished me, it was so much more perfect than I thought myself capable of producing. During the painting of these pictures I felt an unusual glow of enthusiasm and most thrilling pleasure. My hand seemed to move with unusual ease and freedom. During a period of three weeks I was presented with various other pictures, wholly unlike any thing I ever saw or imagined before, and bearing no resemblance to each other. Some of them seem to be reality, with figures and other portions in motion. Others are truly *painted pictures*, the touches of the artist's pencil being distinctly perceptible. On one occasion the picture was a small plaster medal, bearing a figure in armor, with a shield inscribed with the word ONWARD, *very distinct* (I find, on referring to Mr. Davis' last work, this is a peculiarity of the pictorial class of media). These pictures are all of singular and remarkable beauty, with wonderful brilliancy of coloring, so much so, 'tis no easy matter to represent them with coloring alone. One in particular, to be truly represented, would require to be painted on a semi-transparent canvas, and illuminated from behind with powerful lights, like some of the gorgeous stage scenery. Some of these representations convey a useful lesson in a most beautiful manner, while others are extremely elegant compositions merely. They all are impressed upon my mind with extreme distinctness, more so than any pictures I ever *saw*, and haunt me continually. Something keeps saying within, "Paint! Paint!! Paint these Pictures!!!" The spirits insist upon it that I must give up my present employment and paint the pictures they present me, that the world may have some visible representations of the glories of the future life. They promise me more and more brilliant views of the unseen world, and so far have faithfully kept their promise.

Somewhat surprised that I should be selected for the work, I inquired why such a selection was made. "Have you not tried any one else?" The answer was: "We have, but have not before found one competent to execute what we demand in a satisfactory manner." These pictures can not be my own imaginings, the manner of their presentation precludes that idea. They can not be the invention

of the three different media through whom they are transmitted to me, as they have no artistic knowledge, and the result is as new and surprising to them as to me. Perceiving by an article in Vol. I. of the "SHEKINAH," parts of which are quoted in Mr. Davis' book before alluded to, that you are a *pictorial medium*, and the only one I know, I have ventured to address you thus freely. Do you know of any other similar case to my own? Should you desire it, I will give you a more detailed account of the subject of these pictures, and the mode of transmitting them to me.

Yours, for truth,

JOSIAH WOLCOTT.

NEW YORK, Aug. 14th, 1858.

Dear Sir—I perused your letter with a great deal of satisfaction, and should be very happy indeed to hear further from you in detail as to the pictures presented to your view.

Your gift, in some respects, is very like mine; but as I have progressed, I have learned something worth knowing in regard to it. For instance: In the case you refer to, mentioned by Davis, it was clearly allegorical. So for a long time did I think was the vision, first published in the "SHEKINAH." But now I begin to learn that I see two things: one a picture, and the other a reality. The first one I ever had was beyond doubt a reality; yet it was so novel to me, that I did not at all understand it, and the idea that I could see the realities as they existed in the spirit-world never entered my head. But now I know I see those realities, and I am very easily able to distinguish between the reality and the fable.

I mention this to you in order to ask you whether you have ever thought of this, and whether what you are required to paint are not the realities of spirit-life which they wish thus to convey to our minds? If I knew the details of what you see, I could tell better. In the mean time, I infer from the wisdom that is displayed in all these teachings, even amid the crudities and absurdities that are met with, that it is the reality they are presenting to you, and which they wish you to delineate.

They are presenting such things to me now, but I can paint them only with my pen; and how tame and insipid seems my language when I attempt to describe the overwhelming beauty and sublimity which are before me! How often have I wished for my brother's pencil,

and regretted that for want of it so much beauty must be lost! But now the want is supplied, and you are the man to supply it.

Judge, then, how great was my pleasure at perusing your letter, and at learning what provision had been made in that regard! I can well understand your description, for I have seen the same things, and I know if you do justice to what you see, you will present to mankind on your canvas pictures far exceeding any thing even yet dreamed of. Why, the painting of the architecture alone of those scenes would immortalize the artist. Go on, then, in God's name, and rely upon it, that you are to be a great instrument in this stupendous work of regenerating mankind.

The direct onset on the ancient errors and superstitions of the world has at length been made, and if we, who are the humble instruments of those higher powers in this great work, are but true to ourselves and the cause, it will triumph, and then how great our joy, how immense our reward!

"Slight is the task, but immense the reward
Of those who thus labor to imitate God."

One great misfortune to the cause is the timidity of believers m avowing their faith. I have endeavored to overcome that, by showing others, by my example, how easy it is to stem the torrent, and I invoke all the aid I can in that regard. I mention this because I want your aid. Thus I am receiving a vast number of letters now—since my address more than ever—and I design to publish them in order to encourage the friends of the cause, by showing how strong it is. Therefore I want you to let me publish your letter among the rest, *with your name*. It will do great good, you may rely upon it, and to do good is the great end and aim of the whole movement.

I had, like you, asked why I have been selected for my share in this work, and why some one else was not chosen? And I have received such an answer as you got, with a minute detail of their previous search for such an instrument.

See, then, how encouraging is the prospect before us, and let us recollect the inscription on your shield, "ONWARD."

Yours, ever,

J. W. EDMONDS.

Mr. JOSIAH WELCH.

CONCORD, N.H., Aug. 25.

Dear Sir—Yours, dated 14th, I have read over and over again with lively avidity and a bright satisfaction. Accept my thanks for so kind a favor. Up here in the bush such a letter is a real God-send, equal to manna in the wilderness "we read of."

Before answering your queries it may be proper to inform you a little of my previous history.

At the age of sixteen I was apprenticed to the chair-painting business in Boston, under an excellent master. Always having a strong taste for drawing and painting, I was not long satisfied with being merely a chair-painter, but sighed for something higher. I obtained some instruction from Mr. Thomas Doughty, then in Boston, a gentleman now well known all over the Union as one of our very first artists. My leisure time was devoted to practicing on his instructions, instead of being wasted in the low pursuits of my fellow-shopmates.

At the age of twenty-one I was presented with a diploma by the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, certifying to exemplary conduct and superior ability as a workman.

I afterward entered the sign and ornamental business, as it gave me more scope for taste and skill than my previous occupation, besides furnishing an opportunity to acquire more knowledge of art, as my ambition was always to excel in whatever I undertook. I never rested satisfied until I had gained some new lesson of an artistic character.

In November, 1851, I was called to this place to do the ornamental work on coaches and omnibuses, which requires to be of a high character, and must compete with similar work produced in New York.

Here my services command fifty per cent. higher pay than any other in the place. My object in coming here into this comparatively benighted region was mainly to get more knowledge of natural scenery and get further practice on some particular parts of ornamental art. I mention this to explain why I am up here.

But I must to the pictures.

At the first sitting, mentioned in my former letter, I was much affected, and in the night was induced to get up and write my impressions, that I was surrounded by spirits who promised to show me pictures of the spirit-land, which they desired me to paint or

copy. Afterward I thought little or nothing of it, merely attributing it to a high state of mental excitement.

Last June, nearly two years afterward, at a sitting the medium, after passing into a state of partial trance, said she seemed to be in a large gallery surrounded by pictures and portfolios of drawings. "She felt impelled to come to me," she said, and immediately a very strong mesmeric influence came over me with irresistible power. Her forehead was pressed upon mine with such a force she could not get it away for a few minutes, during which time the subject of the tinted sketch was daguerreotyped upon my mind with remarkable vividness. The two statues appeared beckoning with their hands and pointing away over the sea. The gondola appeared laden with passengers, and sailed away to strains of most bewitching music over the sea, and vanished.

Next a thin white cloud like a gauze veil descended from the upper right-hand corner to the position in the sketch, and assumed the form represented, beckoning and pointing away over the sea. I can never forget the impression that picture made upon me. The light was a clear beautiful sunset. The figure was clear and transparent, with the distant clouds and mountains being distinctly visible through the folds of drapery. I should call the picture "THE INVITATION TO THE SPIRIT-LAND."

Do you wonder at my restlessness and anxiety to paint so enchanting a subject presented in so fascinating a manner? The next picture was presented about a week afterward through Mrs. A. in a similar manner, by contact of the forehead with mine. The subject was entirely different in every particular. Not the slightest trace of the first was perceptible in any part. It was a moonlight view of a lake of deep, still water, surrounded by foliage. In the foreground, seated on a throne, was a female figure. Above her head a wreath of roses shed a flood of gold and rose-colored light over the figure, relieving it from the dark background. The head was gracefully turned toward a bird of gorgeous plumage on the right shoulder. In one hand was a white lily, in the other a scepter crowned with three rose-buds. Around the base of the throne was a group of Cupids in a kneeling posture, as if doing homage and offering wreaths of flowers. Particular directions were written for arranging the effect and finishing certain parts, and signed "Raphael." The trance immediately passed off the medium,

and no more demonstrations were to be had that evening. The picture was called, "THE GODDESS OF DIVINE BEAUTY." One thing struck me as singular. The fingers of the medium rested precisely on the organs of the brain required to be excited, while in the ordinary condition she knows nothing of Phrenology, and would be as likely to excite Destructiveness as Ideality. This picture, unlike the first, did not appear a *reality*, but a painting in oil colors, the artist's touches being distinctly visible in every part.

Some remark was made which brought to mind the long-forgotten written impression before alluded to. So I inquired if they had promised me a view of these pictures, about two years before? "Yes, we did." Do you remember of my writing down those impressions? "We do. We impelled you to do so." Why did you not show me the pictures then? "Because you were not prepared to receive them." Here is a truly remarkable coincidence, if it is mesmerism or attributable to any but spiritual causes.

Am I better prepared now? "You are, and we desire you to paint them, and show the world some of the glories of our sphere." This circumstance was never mentioned to any person but my wife, and she laughed at it. The medium was entirely ignorant of me or my existence until a few hours before this communication. The next picture was the medal before alluded to, of which I send a sketch. The upper one is the size and appearance at first. Gradually the arm and sword were raised and pointed to a castle or pile of buildings on a hill. From the doorway a long procession appeared, each person bearing a picture. The motto on the flag above the structure was "*Multum in Parvo*." I was at a loss to know the meaning of all this, but was informed that the figure was my guardian spirit, and I need apprehend no fear from boldly advancing and defending these new views of spiritual existence. I do not yet quite understand the meaning of the whole, but trust it will be revealed in future. This same figure has been presented to my internal once since my return to Concord, and pointing to this sentence written through my own hand: "You are on the right road. *Onward* and *Upward*, progress." Another picture, presented through Mr. J. T. Patterson, by simply laying the hands on my head, was wholly unlike either of the others. A high ridge of ground which ascended until lost in dark clouds. Below, in the

distance, a field in a very barren, dry, parched condition, something like some of the New Hampshire lands. In the foreground, a part of the rich soil was just plowed up, the plow still standing in the furrow, and near it a most majestic figure with a glory about the head, and a benignant countenance. This was Christ inviting some one to hold the plow.

Presently there appeared a vast host of angels coming down out of the cloud. As they approached, the distant field became more green, the foreground appeared planted with growing corn. As the procession approached nearer, the distant field was an immense mass of waving grass; some men appeared mowing it down. The corn had grown and produced a luxuriant crop. Still Christ invited some one to hold the plow. But, thought I, what is the use of that, there is no one to draw? Presently the whole angelic host had arranged themselves into a long procession reaching far up into the distance, and holding a golden cord attached to the implement as if to draw it. Of course, my query was answered. A remarkably beautiful and artistic effect of light was clearly perceptible. At first, it was the gray, cool, morning twilight. As the picture proceeded, the head of Christ was illuminated by the rosy light of sunrise, which gradually descended until the whole was bathed in the full effulgence of brilliant clear sunshine. The dress of the angels consisted of long robes, white at top, next rose-colored, then violet, ending at the feet in a tint of pure blue. Their wings were gray and white tipped with brilliant green. The significance of the picture I take to be this: Here is the rich soil of the human race, the plow of Divine Truth is entered and ground partly broken; Christ invites us to hold and guide it, while the whole angelic host are ready to assist, and our reward is a bountiful harvest.

Another picture I received through Mrs. A. A range of high mountains, their bases covered with dark, tall pines. Above a gorgeous sun of DIVINE TRUTH, shedding broad beams of light over the whole picture. In the valley below and foreground were a vast multitude hailing with joy and admiration the glorious display. I can not convey any idea of its intense brilliancy, so dazzling I could scarcely look at it. This clearly appeared a *painting* like the goddess.

I am not fully developed enough yet to have much presented without the aid of a full medium, but am promised more clearly as I am developed, even into the spirit-land itself. Only one picture have I

seen by myself, and that is, the "*Old and New Theology*." In the foreground is an ancient building of the homeliest style, built of regular square stones, quite weatherbeaten, and covered with moss. The doorway is guarded by an old tombstone with the old-fashioned hideous death's-head and cross-bones. Clambering up the rickety steps, through thorns and briars, are a black-robed priest and a few stiff old women. In the distance an immense structure of gorgeous architecture, its high dome surrounded by a halo of light. From out its numerous portals behold a vast host with banners and musical instruments, preceded by a band of children bearing wreaths and festoons of flowers.

In the execution of these pictures the greatest nicety and finished skill is required. I have not had time to paint any of them since I left Boston, as my other duties press me up so close for time; and I can not bear to let any of these subjects go in a superficial manner, preferring to wait until a favorable opportunity should offer itself. It would be necessary to change my residence from this place, as it would be quite impossible to paint successfully surrounded by such a mental atmosphere as prevails here, though I have not been idle, but have stored my mind with much valuable material for future use. Every cloud, hill, tree, bush, running stream, or other natural object, seems to have a charm which I did not see before. An increased store of sketches can testify to that. I readily perceived that higher knowledge than I possessed was necessary to *finish* such works, particularly angelic figures. But where was I to look for such knowledge? that was the question. Shall I study prints or pictures, or what? Here I was puzzled; but a good spirit came to my aid, and said, "You want *nature* for forms of angels." "You must practice for some time on that part, and I will assist you."

It had never occurred to me to look to nature, for such beings are rare there. But here another difficulty was to be overcome. To get any one here in Concord to stand naked and be drawn was almost impossible at such time as I wanted. What was I to do in this case? It occurred to me that troops of boys went every afternoon to bathe in the river. Hither I repaired, sketch-book in hand, and to my unspeakable joy found just what I wanted. From a dozen or twenty, just as nature made them, I could select just such as I pleased, and they readily assumed any position to be drawn in, even thinking it some slight honor to be considered a "model artist"

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This practice soon made me more familiar with the human figure, and I could readily design such angels as I wanted with my increased knowledge.

These pictures haunt me more and more every day; I can not drive them off my mind, all I can do. Why, yesterday I forgot my flowers and scroll-work, and, before I was aware of it, had covered a panel with chalk sketches of angelic figures. Nothing I ever experienced gives me such exquisite delight as sketching and painting this class of subjects. I feel a little diffidence about these pictures, lest I should not do them full justice. But here is the case; somebody must paint them, and as I am selected for that purpose, why, I feel it my duty to do the best I can. The spirits say they assisted me on the first picture, and promise me further aid. Thus far their word has been sacredly kept, and I can not doubt them for the future. The only apparent difficulty in the way is, I depend on my labor for the support of my family. That is *certain* in my present position. If I make a change it is for an apparent uncertainty. The spirits promise that shall all be right. How far they know or have any control over pecuniary matters, I do not know. However, I would as soon take their word as that of many men. The time has come, I think, when pictorial illustrations will be demanded for the numerous publications on this subject, and some one of artistic skill, and knowledge of spiritual things will be required to furnish them. I have already some knowledge of drawing on wood for engraving, which might be turned to some account. The inclosed drawing would make an excellent *frontispiece* for your forthcoming book; if it should please you to make use of it for that purpose, you are at full liberty to do so. It would be best engraved on copper or steel, but lithography or *very fine wood-cut* would answer. I should rather it would not be engraved at all, than done coarsely. It is drawn wholly from recollection, that you may see how vivid the impression is on my mind, even after a lapse of eight or nine weeks from the time I received it. The size is right for either a 12mo or 8vo volume. This sketch is not so perfect as I could desire, but I have not time to make another.

In regard to my letter, which you request the liberty to publish, you may feel perfectly free to use, as you see fit, any letters or my name, if it will be the means of assisting mankind in their forward

progress. I shall ever account it a privilege to perform my share in that great work, by any means honorable and effective. The movement, up here out of the way of almost every thing but granite, is making rapid headway. New media are being developed where one would least expect any thing of the kind. Partial and inferior as most of these media are, still they are sufficient to awaken much attention, and of course some opposition. The principal argument is, that it is all the work of the devil, and only a new trap he is setting to catch souls with. Of course such ignorance is not worth a serious answer. For myself I boldly and fearlessly advocate and defend the phenomena whenever they are attacked, and excite everybody to witness the demonstrations whenever an opportunity occurs.

I have just now induced a person, who was a most determined unbeliever, to look into the matter. He has seen enough to puzzle him and stagger his philosophy. I observe that unbelievers usually make the best spiritualists, probably because they have cut loose from old errors, and have minds free and independent enough to look the matter in the face for themselves, and having made up their minds have boldness and intrepidity enough to advance the newly-discovered truth.

Please excuse delay in answering your letter. I was absent when it arrived.

Yours, truly,

J. WOLCOTT.

To J. W. EDMONDS, Esq.

Appendix—G.

Those who have never investigated the subject of spiritual intercourse, and whose ideas of it are bounded by mere physical manifestations, have but faint conceptions of its value or its importance. Others who have gone farther, and looked into it rationally, know full well how great a blessing it is to man.

The following correspondence shows one phase of it, of great interest, and yet this is but a single instance among many with which spiritualists are familiar. These letters speak for themselves. It is not of much moment who are the writers, but in one of them will be recognized an individual who, it is well known, has given the subject a careful investigation, and who is a thorough believer in the reality, as well as the blessing of spiritual intercourse.—SHEKINAH.

—, June, 1852.

To —:

Sir—The perusal of this letter will, no doubt, excite an emotion of surprise in your mind, at the temerity of the writer, in addressing you on such a subject; a person of whom you are and will, doubtless, ever remain totally ignorant. But the explanation I have given will, I hope, disabuse your mind of any false or injurious impressions as to my motives in thus addressing you. As the daughter of a clergyman, I was early and strictly trained to believe. When, however, in the course of years, my love of study, and my somewhat speculative turn of mind, led me to the perusal of works adverse to the belief in which I had been trained, I unconsciously imbibed some of the opinions of their authors, without admitting it to myself or acknowledging it to others. With the Atheist, I found myself questioning the truth of revelation, and with the Materialist, doubting the possibility of a future. Thus my mind remained, until the death of one dearer to me than life again directed my thoughts to the future state, and the possibility of there recognizing the being so dear to me in this. While engaged in the perusal and study of all that would throw light on that hidden world, your name appeared before the public as a believer in the "Spiritual Knockings,"

as they are called ; a name that guarantees us against deceit and imposture, and which at once convinced my mind as to the truth of these revelations from the other world, which we of the South ridicule and denounce. I pray you then, sir, to tell me, Is there a spiritual world ? And shall we there recognize each other ? I do not ask for arguments from the schools, but of your own personal knowledge. Can you tell aught of that world, which will console me for the loss of one I so prized ? I hope you will pardon these queries, which to one not acquainted with me must convey a doubt of my sanity. And believe me, whatever you may see fit to write shall remain locked in my own heart. For which purpose I beg that, should you do me the honor to answer this, you will direct your letter to —, in lieu of my real name as signed. And I also request that you *will not show* this to any one, but *burn* it immediately. Confiding in your generosity for an early answer,

I remain, with the truest respect, yours,

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—, June 18, 1852.

Dear Madam—You need make no apology for addressing me on the subject of your letter. The privilege which I enjoy has not been conferred on me for my own benefit only, but also for the good of others, and it is at once my duty, as well as a pleasure to me, to answer such inquiries so far as my other duties will allow me time to do so. My own mind was once very much in the condition in which you describe yours. I, too, doubted the truth of revelation and the existence of the soul after death, and I looked upon spiritual intercourse (when I thought of it at all) as a humbug. I was led into an investigation of the subject from above, and though not without my own volition, yet without any seeking on my part. I have pursued my investigations for a year and a half, with the utmost patience and scrutiny and under very favorable circumstances. I was slow to believe, and demanded proof with a pertinacity, and at times a captiousness, that must have tried the patience of those who were teaching me. The proof was accorded me, and I should have been demented to have withheld my belief any longer.

It is not practicable in the limits of such a letter to give you even a faint idea of what those proofs were. I must content myself with saying to you, that I have heard, seen, and felt the presence of de-

parted spirits. My own judgment and reason brought to bear on this evidence have led me to such conclusions, and I have the most satisfactory evidence of the identity of those who have thus communed with me.

I have learned what is the nature of the next stage of existence after this life, and that the spirits of our departed friends are ever hovering around us, watching over us, breathing their influence upon us, and communing with us, whenever our grossness and blindness will allow them; that they have many ways of communing—some through the senses, as by the knockings, etc., and some through impressions made on the mind; that they are more happy to commune with us even than we are to have them, for their affections grow after death, and though they are free from earthly cares, they still participate in earthly joys and earthly loves.

I speak of the condition of the pure and good, of those who acknowledge Christ, not by worshipping his person, but by obeying his command to love God and our neighbor, and who recognize the great lesson he came to teach, namely, the spiritual nature of man, and his eternal existence.

These are some of the sublime truths which are taught by this new dispensation, and they come to us through our dear friends who have departed, with a degree of overflowing love that is inexpressibly touching, and that elevates the mind while it purifies the heart.

You will appreciate my reasons for dealing in such general terms. To enter into detail would require me to give you the contents of my written records, which would fill several hundred pages; and I can not expect you, or any one, to believe on my bare assertion. I do not ask any one to believe on less evidence than I exacted. But it is thus that I answer your questions, happy indeed if thus doing I afford any relief to you 'mid your mourning.

Believe me, if you have in the spiritual world one dearer to you than life, he is ever around and near you, watching over and guarding you, conscious of your every thought, rendered more happy by every evidence of your purity and affection, and striving to make his presence known to you. You already have an inward consciousness of his presence, which he has produced, and it is to be hoped that, ere long, you will have the *sensible* evidence of his presence, which has been accorded to me.

• I feel that this letter will not afford you all the consolation you

deserve, and if at any time you desire more, do not hesitate to write to me. If I knew who your dear one was, perhaps I might be able to converse with him for you.

I shall address this as you require, and it is fortunate that you gave me the address plainly, for I can not read your surname as you have signed it.

I am, very truly, yours,

* * *

P. S.—I find that I have omitted to give a direct answer to one of your questions—"Shall we in the spirit-world recognize each other?"

Indeed we shall; I have had most satisfactory evidence on that point; moral evidence addressed to the mind alone, as well as by sight and sound.

I have more than once seen congregated together, their thoughts bent on me, the dear ones who have left me here, my wife, my children, my parents, my brother, and sister. And when I have asked whence this strong affection for me in the spiritual world, it was answered, "Because you have many here whom you dearly loved on earth."

My wife once said to me, "We shall soon be again united, where no change can sever us. I have our dear children with me, and we have a mansion prepared for you, not made with hands, but a structure perfect: and the holy altar around which we kneel in fervent prayer to God for the advancement of spiritual progression is built in the center of our holy mansion.

"Think of us, in our happy home, awaiting your arrival with patience."

This is a little only of the abundant evidence I have on this subject, but it is enough to answer your question.

—, July 8th, 1852.

DEAR SIR—Allow me to return you my sincere thanks for your kindness in answering my letter. I must acknowledge that sincerely as I desired it, I scarce expected a reply; and I now doubt not that the almost resistless inclination to address you came from a higher source than the grief of a despairing mind. You have acted the part of the good Samaritan, and poured oil into the wound of one

like to die ; and you will have rendered a death-bed, sooner or later, calm and hopeful, which might have been disturbed by doubts. For this I again thank you. Nor could any other have afforded me this comfort, since in the integrity and judgment of no other could I have placed the same confidence.

I have also to thank you for the promise of communicating with the departed one, through you. She was but a little child, my little —, scarce five years old ; but as an only daughter, had become doubly dear to me. To others my grief may appear excessive, but you, who have lost children, may conceive of the anguish of a mother's spirit, in seeing suddenly snatched from her arms, in the space of a few hours, the idol of her heart ; and without a full belief of ever meeting her again. I would fain know of her happiness—if she still remembers me—and who in that spirit-world can replace the mother in this. We know nothing of the progression of mind in that happy world ; but it would give me pleasure to know, that it advanced in proportion with their happiness. Adieu, sir. I need not assure you of the comfort and happiness you would give me should you be able to communicate with my little one ; and my confidence in your benevolence assures me that I will receive this consolation if it be possible.

Most respectfully, yours,

* * *

—, *July 14th, 1853.*

MY DEAR MADAM—I have just received yours of the 8th inst., and sit down to commence my reply while I have a moment's leisure, though I may not complete it to-day.

It affords me exquisite pleasure to learn that I have been instrumental in conveying comfort to you amid your afflictions. The knowledge that it is permitted me to do so, is a comfort to me in the trials to which I also am subject, and affords me ample compensation for the inconsiderable annoyances to which I am sometimes subjected by my known belief in spiritual intercourse. You are by no means a solitary instance of the kind. It was but a few days ago that I was enabled to convey like consolation to a lady in Tennessee, who within a brief period had lost a tender husband and an only child, and who felt as if she had nothing to live for. I was not only

able to assure her of the continued presence around her of those she loved so well, but to convey to her a message from them fraught with the purest and most ardent love. "Tell her," was part of the message, "my spirit loves to linger around her haunts, grieves with her grief, and sorrows with her sorrow. Tell her that loved child comes with me and twines its little arms around its mother's neck, and caresses that mother it so much loved on earth, and so much loves in heaven."

I once witnessed a death-scene, where a similar feeling was exhibited. It was of the father of a lady, who thus, within the short space of three months, lost her father and her only two children, the eldest an interesting boy of six or seven years old. I saw the spirit as it departed from its body of clay and assumed its new form. In his departure he was attended by the spirit of his son, who had died some thirty years ago, by that of my wife, and of this lady's eldest son. While the attention of this gentleman's son was directed solely to his father, and that of my wife partly to her friends who were present, the child's attention was confined solely to its mother; his face beamed with joy and affection for her, and he was anxious to throw himself upon her bosom, so that she might perceive his presence.

I mention these things to you, as from my own experience, as they will tend to answer one of your questions, independent of all information you may receive as to your own child. I will, of course, as far as I may be permitted, add the evidence as to her.

There is another topic upon which also I can speak, irrespective of her, and that is, as to their advancement or "progression of mind in proportion to their happiness." Nothing is more satisfactorily revealed to us than the truth of this proposition. As sin flows from ignorance, so does happiness flow from knowledge. And children who, from an early death, can not be taught here, are taught there those things which must be learned sooner or later, and which bring happiness in their train.

The great law of progress which this new dispensation teaches pervades all created things, from the most inanimate and sluggish particle of matter to the Great Mind that seeth all things. The immortal soul is not exempt from it, and it is most wisely ordered that in proportion to its development in knowledge and goodness, is its happiness.

This lays at the very foundation of the new dispensation, and is

far too vast a theme to be more than barely alluded to, within the limits of such a letter as this.

It was this which Christ came to teach us—our spiritual nature—and with it, the duty and destiny of eternal progress. His teachings have passed through ages of blindness and ignorance, and have been warped from their true purpose, until they have, in a great measure, lost their power over the minds of men. That power is now to be revived by these new revelations, that all may learn how essential it is to happiness hereafter to enter upon the plane of everlasting progression. Without knowledge that can not be done. And the knowledge requisite is not that which is to be found in the glosses of men, but in the great book of nature around us, where God has written it with his own Almighty hand.

I have written more than I expected to when I commenced; but the subject is so vast that it can hardly be touched without expansion.

My chief object was to give you an idea of the condition of infants in the spirit-world, as it has been revealed to me, yet now I can do so only in a limited degree.

It is one of happiness, of course, for they have never sinned, and, therefore, are exempt from the sufferings which sin *ever* brings in its train. They are in schools where they are taught those things which it would have been better that they should have learned here. They are never without the attendance of some good spirit, whose happiness consists, in a degree, in developing their minds. They grow in stature as they would have done here, and the affection which they entertain for friends here is cherished by them and by their teachers, for it is love, as well as knowledge, which lays at the foundation of progression.

Independent, then, of all information that I may be permitted to obtain in respect to her, you may be assured, from the workings of a universal law, that her condition is one of happiness, and that her affection for you is cherished as one great cause of that happiness.

And now I lay down my pen that I may leave room for the information I hope to be able to-day to obtain for you.

—, July 17.

I resume my pen to conclude my letter; for, as I leave town to-day, for a few days' absence, I do not think it well to delay sending

my letter any longer. I have not yet been able to make my inquiries about your loved one. I need not detail the difficulties that stand in the way of effecting our purpose in such cases as readily as we desire. They are not insurmountable, but they cause delay sometimes. In the case of the lady in Tennessee, it was nearly a month before I could answer her inquiries and obtain the communication she wanted. In your case, as in hers, I will not be unmindful of your wishes, but avail myself of the first opportunity, and then write you again.

In the mean time I ought to say to you, that I did not comply with the request contained in your first letter—to destroy it. I was confident it would be of service to the cause, and I, therefore, preserved it. That and your second letter have been read to many friends, and have afforded great joy and satisfaction to many, as I expected they would; and thus you see that the joy which has thus been given to you is reflected back from you to others, as much strangers to you as you are to me.

Last evening I read them, and a lady present, dressed in black, a stranger to me, was bathed in tears as I concluded.

Of course, I do not reveal the name of my correspondent, nor even the place whence the letters come. Thus far I preserve your confidence.

I am persuaded, however, that if I had your permission to use the correspondence freely (with or without your name, as you please), it would be the means of doing much good to others, for it teaches a most instructive and beautiful lesson. That, however, I commit entirely to your wishes, and will obey them, even to the destruction of your letters.

If, however, you consent to my using the correspondence, I will have to ask you to send me copies of this and my former letter, for I have not retained any.

I hope soon to be able to write you again, and, in the mean time, I am as ever,

Yours, truly,

* * *

After writing the letter of the 14th of July, I obtained the desired information as to Mrs. ——'s child, and wrote to her that she was under the guardian care of her grandmother, and was often taken to her mother to caress her and preserve in her the love for her mother.

—, July 28th, 1852.

DEAR SIR—I owe you an apology for not having, ere this, answered your kind letter of the 14th. Indisposition must in part plead my excuse, though I acknowledge I could not at first decide to grant your request with regard to my letters. I have, however, concluded to leave the matter entirely with you; for, notwithstanding I can not conceive of any possible advantage to be derived from their use, I would not willingly throw an obstacle in the path of good. I must, however, stipulate for an entire suppression of both name and address; under no other circumstances would I allow of their being read. I will send you a copy of your letters as soon as my strength will permit of my copying them. To part with the originals is more than my philosophy can well bear. They are treasured by me next to my Bible; for when distressed or disturbed by doubt or sorrow, I derive always renewed comfort from their perusal; for I must not conceal from myself that my conviction of the truth of this revelation is founded on my belief in your integrity and the soundness of your judgment; for although I argue that a man whose reasoning powers and judgment have been disciplined in the severe and exact schools of the law, and by long service on the bench, is not one likely to be deceived or carried away by his imagination or by cunning fables, others can with reason contend that the most powerful intellects have been deceived by shallow pretense and designing hypocrisy. There is no system, say they, so absurd, that advocates can not be found for it among the learned.

One sentence in your letter of the 14th troubles me. You say, "They are in schools where they are taught those things which it would have been better that they could have learned here." Why? We would naturally suppose that the instruction there would be much more perfect, and knowledge acquired with more ease than with us.

I thank you a thousand times for the information contained in your last note, and also for the incidental proof it conveyed of the truth of the theory of this revelation. I had not told you that my little — possessed a relative in that happy land. I thank you also for the pamphlet. You need not have feared misconstruction; it contained precisely the information I was anxious for; and who would not wish to know and become familiar with the face of a friend, and my best friend I must always regard you; for what do I not owe you? tranquillity, peace, and comfort, and in return I can give you

nothing but gratitude and thanks, and both of these you may be always certain of receiving from

Yours, with the utmost respect,

* * *

P. S.—Should you have occasion to again address me, you may direct to my own name. Should you thus favor me, you must inform me whether you wish those copies immediately, as in that case I will try to forward them. You must pardon this scrawl—I have been obliged to lie down from weakness several times since I commenced.

August 2d, 1852.

DEAR MADAM—I hasten to answer your note of the 28th July, which I have just received, in order to relieve you from the necessity of hurrying in sending me copies of my letters. The sooner I get them the sooner I can do good with them, but that is all the occasion there is for any haste in the matter. And I am anxious you should fully understand my reasons for wishing them.

One great recommendation of this new dispensation, is the consolation it affords to the afflicted and dying. I have already the record of many examples of this, and your case is a most interesting addition to the number. So that when I am asked, as I often am, to what end is all this? I may point to it as indeed "The Comforter." In that respect you will readily perceive that our correspondence can not fail to do good to others when made known. Therefore it is that I have made to you the request which you are so kind as to comply with; and you may rely upon my taking care to suppress every thing that would be likely to point out you, rather than any other female in the United States, as my correspondent.

You are entirely right in supposing that the conclusion at which I have arrived on the subject of spiritual intercourse is not the effect of delusion, but the result of most calm and deliberate judgment. It would be quite out of the question in the limits of a letter to give you a detail of the measures I adopted to guard against deception—self or otherwise. A general statement in that regard is made in the *Shekinah*, but it is very general, and, I may add, in equally general terms, that if it is ever permitted one to believe in the conclusions of his own deliberate judgment, founded on the deliberate and long-continued evidence of his senses, I may be allowed to believe in the

reality of spiritual intercourse. Nay! I can not help believing so as long as I am sane.

Still, I can not help regretting that you are compelled to found your belief on any assertion of mine. It would be so much better for you, with your acuteness of intellect, if you could see and judge for yourself—if you could apply your own reason to the evidence of your own senses. For there never was any thing that more emphatically and earnestly addressed itself to our reason than does this new dispensation in all its parts. Blind faith it utterly repudiates, and it appeals only to the true Godlike quality of man—his reason. But I am afraid it will be long before it will make much progress where man is held in mental bondage of any kind. Freedom and intelligence are both necessary for its spread.

But I pass from that topic to answer your inquiry as to the education of children in the spirit-world, and I can do that best in the language of my spiritual teachers.

On the 25th November last it was said to me: "Those who die in infancy grow up to manhood, and are instructed in the spirit-world in those things which they ought to have learned here. It is a misfortune and a violation of a law of nature to die in infancy, because the object of their first stage of existence is thereby thwarted. In the spirit-world, infants are placed in a sort of intermediate condition between the lower and higher conditions, and they are there taught and attended to by superior spirits. They are never without such attendance. They are there carefully instructed, yet their condition is, in some respects, unfortunate; for though by their early death they escape the physical sufferings of this sphere, that very ignorance of our sufferings takes away from them the capacity to enjoy the happy change which they would have attained if they had remained here to maturity. They know nothing of the contrast between that stage of existence and this, which adds so keen a zest to the enjoyment of those who depart from this sphere after having experienced all its sorrows and sufferings.

"Another disadvantage is, that they never learn many of the feelings and emotions which a longer continuance on earth would have taught them, and which enter much into the happiness or misery of the next state of existence."

So much for the spirit's teachings. I add from my records some remarks of my own on the subject.

"These remarks explain what I have already observed, and what has sometimes hurt me, namely, that neither my son nor daughter (both of whom died in infancy more than twenty-five years ago) though they evince a strong affection for me, have evinced the same sympathy with my feelings that my adult friends in the spirit-world have. They seem, indeed, to be unconscious that there are any such feelings in me. So, too, the spirit of my nephew, when attending the death of his father, was solely intent upon him, and seemed to have little or no sympathy with the sorrow of the living, while my wife, who was present also, evidently had."

I ought also to add what, doubtless, made a difference. These were all cases of persons who had died twenty-five or thirty years ago, while children who have recently died have displayed the strongest affection imaginable. With them, doubtless as with us, time comes with healing on his wings and a weaning from earthly ties.

This is what I meant by the remark to which you allude, and I owe to you the explanation, lest you may be misled by a remark so very general in its character.

I regret very much the impaired state of your health. I know well how difficult it is, amid continued physical suffering, to bear the mind bravely up to the full discharge of our higher duties.

I hope, however, soon to hear from you again, and to learn of your recovery. If at any time you wish farther information on this all-important and interesting subject, do not, I pray you, hesitate a moment in making known your wishes, for aiding you gives me more pleasure than you are aware of.

I am, as ever, truly yours,

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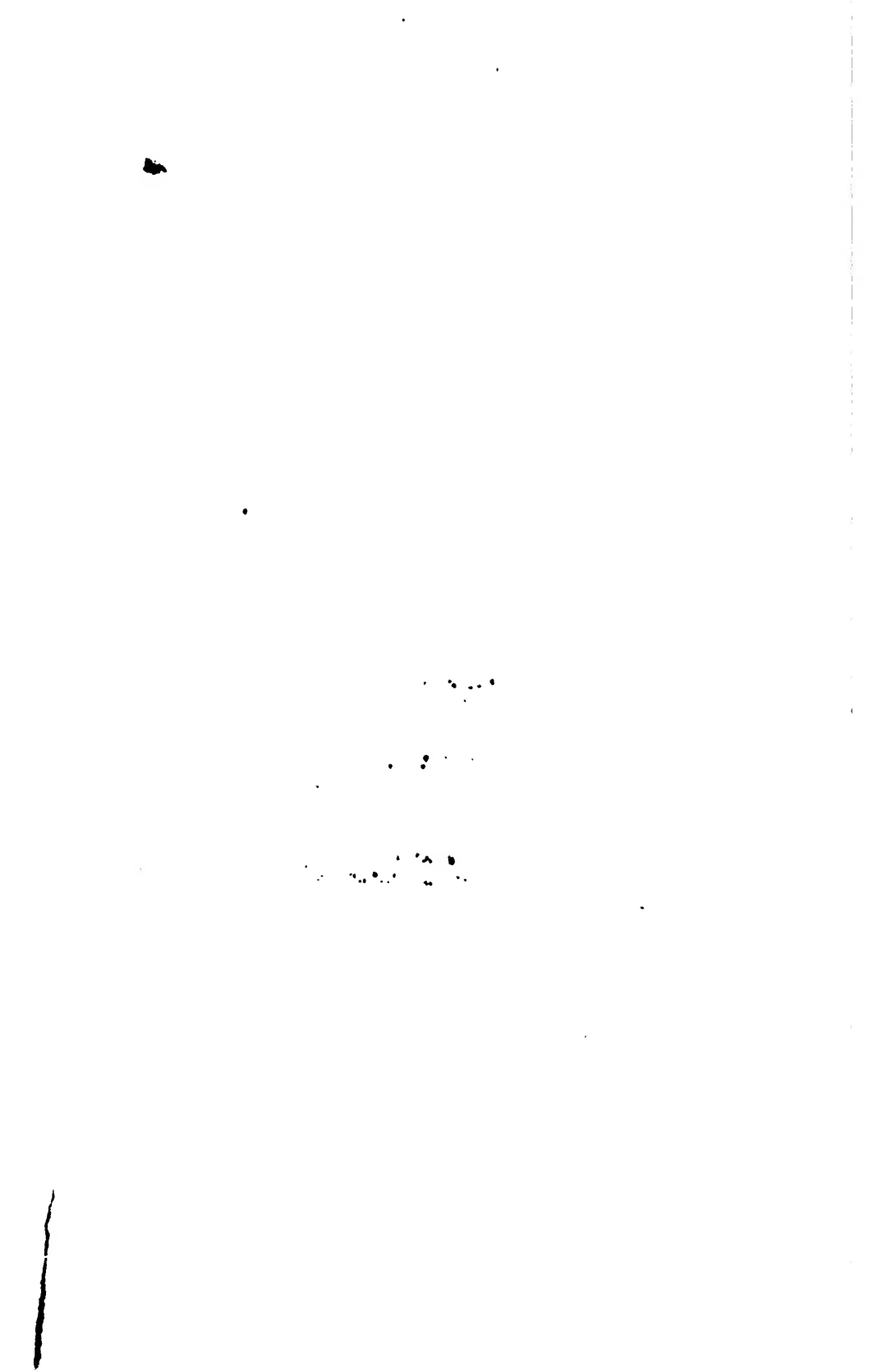
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